

UNIVERSAL  
LIBRARY



139 133











•

# **HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS**

•







# HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

THE UNIQUE RECORD OF A SPORTSMAN'S  
YEAR AMONG THE NORTHERNMOST TRIBE  
—THE BIG GAME HUNTING, THE NATIVE  
LIFE, AND THE BATTLE FOR EXISTENCE  
THROUGH THE LONG ARCTIC NIGHT

BY  
HARRY WHITNEY

ILLUSTRATED  
WITH PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY THE AUTHOR



NEW YORK  
THE CENTURY CO.

1911

Copyright, 1910, by  
THE CENTURY Co.

---

*Published, October, 1910*

•

TO  
CAPT. ROBERT A. BARTLETT

•





# CONTENTS

## CHAPTER

I	NORTHWARD BOUND	
II	FAREWELL TO THE SHIPS . . . . .	23
III	AT ANNOOTOK . . . . .	46
IV	BUFFETED BY STORM AND ICE . . . . .	61
V	ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE LONG NIGHT . . . . .	73
VI	A BEAR HUNT TO HUMBOLDT GLACIER . . . . .	90
VII	THE GOING OF THE SUN . . . . .	105
VIII	HOME LIFE IN THE IGLOOS . . . . .	122
IX	A NIGHT TRIP TO CAPE RUSSELL . . . . .	139
X	HOW WE CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS . . . . .	152
XI	ADRIFT ON THE ICE . . . . .	165
XII	HUNTING WALRUS IN THE NIGHT . . . . .	179
XIII	BACK OVER THE GLACIERS . . . . .	194
XIV	PREPARING FOR THE ARCTIC DAY . . . . .	209
XV	THE RETURN OF THE SUN . . . . .	231
XVI	WHEN THE ESKIMOS LEFT US . . . . .	249
XVII	OFF TO ELLESMERE LAND . . . . .	272
XVIII	"OMINGMONG!" THE MUSK-ox! . . . . .	290
XIX	ON THE SMITH SOUND ICE . . . . .	312
XX	THE SPRING AWAKENING . . . . .	330

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
XXI HUNTING THE NARWHAL . . . . .	346
XXII DUCK SHOOTING ON THE ISLANDS . . . . .	370
XXIII THE DANGERS OF THE SEA . . . . .	385
XXIV AMONG THE WALRUS HERDS . . . . .	402
XXV THE SHIP AT LAST . . . . .	418
XXVI BACK TO CIVILIZATION . . . . .	435

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Entering Ellesmere Land, the home of the musk-ox <i>Frontispiece</i>	
Author in a whale's mouth . . . . .	5
Stripping blubber from a whale . . . . .	10
A group of Peary's Eskimos . . . . .	15
The <i>Erik</i> in Etah Harbor . . . . .	20
Captain Sam Bartlett in command of the <i>Erik</i> . . . . .	26
On board the <i>Erik</i> , spying out walrus . . . . .	29
Encamped on a narwhal hunt . . . . .	36
Carrying deer meat out of rocky country . . . . .	39
The author's shack at Etah . . . . .	43
The whale-boat in a dangerous position . . . . .	50
Two hunters of the Highland tribe . . . . .	53
Eskimos at their summer home . . . . .	59
The <i>Roosevelt</i> leaving Etah for Cape Sheridan with Peary in command . . . . .	70
Kayak in smooth water . . . . .	78
On Smith Sound ice . . . . .	85
Wind-break of snow-blocks . . . . .	93
Camp on the way to Humboldt Glacier; Mr. Whitney in the foreground . . . . .	100
Eskimo women fishing through ice. Note the babies on their backs . . . . .	107

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The author preparing his breakfast on the march . . . .	115
Annotok, showing a snow igloo, and a dory raised from the ground in which dog food was stored . . . . .	125
Looking for a way through rough ice . . . . .	132
Loading the sledges . . . . .	135
Typical scene in Eskimo camp on the ice . . . . .	145
Musk-ox trophies lashed on sledge . . . . .	156
A killing; author, rifle in hand, stands over the carcass of a musk-ox he has just shot . . . . .	162
Curious ice formation in Ellesmere Land . . . . .	170
Bivouacked in Ellesmere Land . . . . .	175
Looking for seal from an ice hummock . . . . .	183
Hare on the run—probably the first photograph of Arctic hare ever published . . . . .	189
Musk-ox wedged between rocks in his death plunge down mountain side. The author, with rifle in hand . . . .	200
The <i>Erik</i> in small ice . . . . .	212
In Ellesmere Land. Heavy going . . . . .	217
The <i>Erik</i> unloading coal in Etah Harbor . . . . .	228
Arctic hare . . . . .	233
Arctic hare . . . . .	240
Seal Hunting—The seals are shot through a hole in a white cloth or hareskin screen . . . . .	245
Resting the dogs . . . . .	263
In Ellesmere Land . . . . .	273
In Ellesmere Land; Eiseceyou finds water . . . . .	280
Building a wind-break . . . . .	288
Musk-ox at bay . . . . .	293
The largest trophy of the hunt . . . . .	298

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
Dogs holding up musk-ox . . . . .	301
The musk-ox. A fine specimen . . . . .	305
Hauling musk-ox to camp . . . . .	310
Skinning the musk-ox—The skinning must be done quickly before the carcass freezes . . . . .	313
Rough ice; Smith Sound . . . . .	317
Eiseeyou and the author with baby musk-ox in his arms . . . . .	321
Going snow-blind . . . . .	327
Little auks . . . . .	338
Spanning a lead with dog-sled . . . . .	347
The first narwhal of the season, killed by Kulutinguah, who is indicated by the arrow . . . . .	354
The return from a seal hunt . . . . .	363
Kulutinguah's Kooner . . . . .	373
Shooting duck and gathering eggs; Littleton Island . . . . .	380
Ready to launch the whale-boat; Kulutinguah in the kayak . . . . .	389
The <i>Erik</i> working her way through small ice . . . . .	396
Looking for walrus . . . . .	410
Shooting a walrus from the whale-boat—Walrus come up for about a minute and stay under for perhaps fifteen minutes . . . . .	415
Iceberg off the Labrador . . . . .	424
The <i>Roosevelt</i> with all sail set off the Labrador . . . . .	431
Hoisting a polar bear on board . . . . .	438
A fair-sized walrus . . . . .	445



## INTRODUCTION

MR. HARRY WHITNEY has brought out of the Arctic a remarkable and absorbing narrative of thrilling adventures and unusual experiences. It is a narrative unlike any other description of Arctic life and travel. It is a distinctive and valuable contribution to the literature of the region. Not only will it interest and hold the sportsman and lover of wilderness adventure, but from an ethnic standpoint it contains much that is new concerning the Highland Eskimos, the most northerly inhabitants of the earth.

Complete success in the hunt demanded that Mr. Whitney adopt the Eskimo mode of life, share with the natives their privations and their dangers and lend his aid in their incessant struggle for existence. This brought him into closer touch with the people, both individually and as a whole than has ever been possible for explorers bent upon purely scientific research. Throughout an entire year with the native families in *igloo* and *tupek*, or with the huntsmen of the tribe on the trail of game, he was afforded an opportunity to observe many phases of the Eskimo life hitherto unrecorded.

The chief feature of the narrative, however, is adventure. The imaginative writer could hardly pic-



## INTRODUCTION

ture more thrilling incidents and hairbreadth escapes than fell to the lot of Mr. Whitney and his Eskimo companions on their hunts for bear, walrus or musk-ox, on the trail, on the sea, or at times when they were overtaken by the fearful storms and hurricanes characteristic of the region. Hardly a chapter but contains an unusual adventure. Mr. Whitney is a very modest man, however, and in his record he has so undervalued the hazard and peril of many of the positions in which he was placed, that one must read between the lines to fully appreciate them.

I lay down the manuscript with reluctance. I am sorry to say farewell to old Kulutinguah, to Ilabrado, to the excitable Tukshu and Sipsu, and the other notable ones of the tribe whom one cannot fail to like and respect.

Mr. Whitney has given us a book that is worth while, and one that should take and hold a prominent place in the literature of travel and adventure.

DILLON WALLACE.

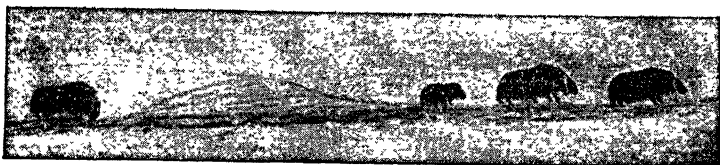
New York, June 17, 1910.

•

## HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

•





# HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

## I

### NORTHWARD BOUND

**T**HE morning of July seventeenth, 1908, dawned clear and beautiful. The steamer *Erik*, lying at anchor in Sydney Harbor, was ready to sail. Steam was up, her cargo of coal for the Polar expedition, to which she was attached, was aboard—six hundred tons in her hold and bunkers, and innumerable bags piled securely on deck—the last of her provisions had been hoisted over her side, and Captain Sam Bartlett, her master—than whom there is no abler sailing the northern seas—awaited orders from explorer Peary to point her prow toward the Arctic Circle.

As Mr. Peary's guest, I had come on the steamship *Roosevelt* from New Bedford, Massachusetts, to Sydney, arriving on the fifteenth, and here met my traveling companions, Mr. G. H. Norton and Mr. E. P. Larned. We three were sportsmen passengers on the *Erik*, bound for Northern Greenland in search of such shooting as a voyage to Etah might afford,

## 4 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

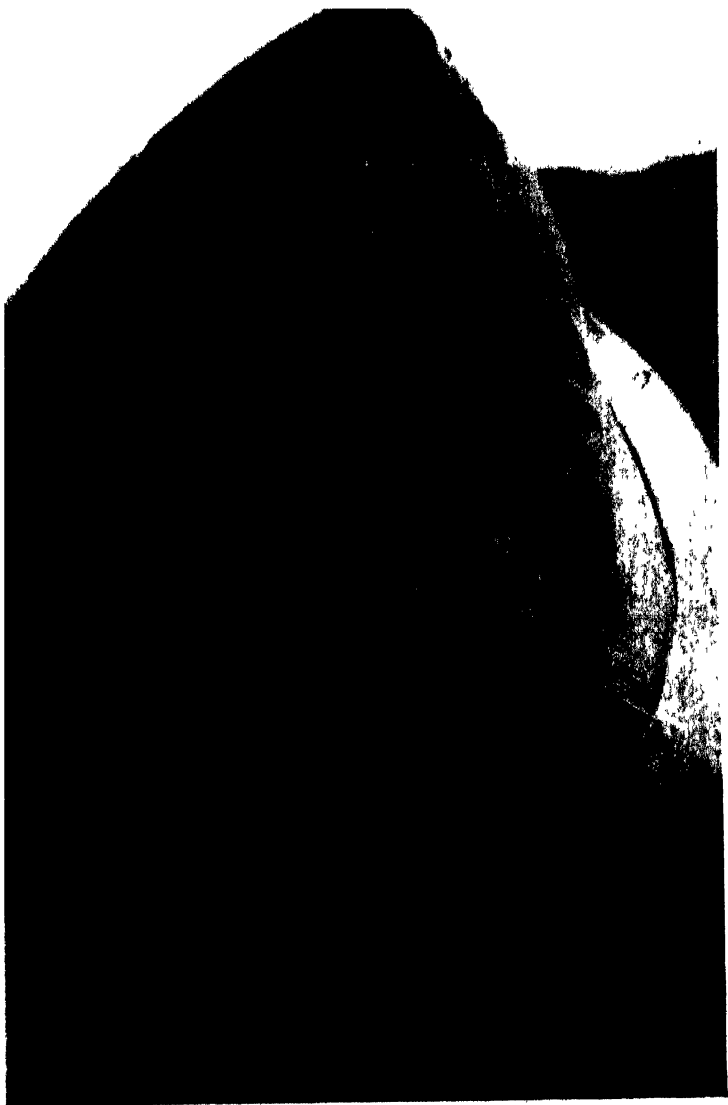
and with no other expectation at the time than to return home in the autumn with the ship.

For many years I had desired to extend my hunting-trips into this region, and had now taken advantage of an opportunity to do so. Walrus and other large aquatic game would be certain to offer good sport, in all probability there would be opportunity for a polar bear hunt, and possibly some trophy might be obtained of the musk-ox, so coveted by sportsmen because of the fact that it inhabits only the most remote and inaccessible regions of the Far North.

I particularly desired to secure musk-ox and other trophies, not only to round out my own collection representing the big game animals of North America, which for several years I have hunted with some success, but also to obtain specimens for other scientific collections.

The novelty of the voyage, the expected sport, and the collection of trophies were, then, my only reasons for being on the *Erik*, and I had no part whatever in the Polar expedition to which the vessel was attached.

My arms consisted of a 30-40, a .35, and a .22 automatic Winchester rifle. Mr. Norton and I had together provided ourselves with a whale-boat equipped with a three horse power motor, to be used on short cruises at such times as the ship might be in harbor, and to assist in hunting. Tents, oil stoves and other necessary camping utensils, suited to the region we were to visit, completed our equipment, together with a supply of such articles as we might find useful in



AUTHOR IN A WHALE'S MOUTH

11

12

barter, or as presents to the natives in securing their assistance when required.

The *Erik*, formerly in the Hudson's Bay Company's service, is now regularly employed during the spring months as a sealer, technically called an "ice hunter," as the seal hunting is done on the great ice floes lying off the Labrador coast. Designed for this purpose, and not as a passenger carrying vessel, her accommodations are naturally limited to her needs. It will be understood, therefore, that our passenger quarters were in no wise to be compared with those on a transatlantic liner, and it will be understood, also, that there was a choice of staterooms. In true sportsman's style, we proceeded to match coins for this choice, and it fell to my lot to lose all around.

It was past midnight when sailing orders were finally received, and half past twelve on the morning of July eighteenth when the *Erik* weighed anchor and steamed out of Sydney Harbor. The night was clear, the deep blue sky studded with bright stars, and the sea smooth and beautiful. It was so entrancing that I remained on the bridge with Captain Bartlett until two o'clock.

When I came on deck the following morning the sun shone from a cloudless sky, the air clear and bracing, and the vessel forging ahead at full speed. Above and around us soared innumerable gulls, their white wings glistening in the sunlight. Early in the afternoon St. Paul's Island was passed on our port, with the hulls of two large steamers, wrecked a fortnight before, plainly visible; and presently the dark,



## 8 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

rock-bound coast of Newfoundland loomed up on our starboard and Cape St. George was soon left behind.

In the evening a heavy blanket of fog settled over the sea, and rain set in. So thick was the fog, in fact, that one could not see the length of the ship. Speed was reduced, and throughout the night and next forenoon two minute blasts of the *Erik's* whistle sounded deep-throated warnings of our presence. Once a great whale with her young rose very near the ship's side, blew several times, and then was swallowed up like a phantom by the mist.

Finally, near midday on the nineteenth, the sun broke out through low-lying, thick fog banks, and from the lookout in the crow's-nest on the foremast came, "Land ho!" When at length the fog banks melted away, we discovered ourselves plowing through the Straits of Belle Isle, with the bleak, rocky coast of Labrador, punctuated by many stranded icebergs, stretching out on our left.

Our first port was to be Hawkes Harbor, South-eastern Labrador, where we were to take aboard from the whaling station there several tons of fresh whale's meat for winter food for the dogs of the Polar party; and early in the evening the *Erik* entered the *tickle*<sup>1</sup> and dropped anchor. Here we were to remain two days while loading cargo and awaiting the arrival of the *Roosevelt*. This delay afforded ample time to look over the factory, and to try for trout and salmon

<sup>1</sup> A narrow water passage or strait leading into a harbor, or connecting two larger bodies of water. The word is local, peculiar to Newfoundland and The Labrador.





STRIPPING BARK FROM A WHALE

in a stream which empties into the Bay at its upper end.

The whale factory at Hawkes Harbor, typical of the whale factories of the coast, is a big, box-like frame structure, fitted with immense caldrons for rendering the oil, and machinery for working up and utilizing the carcass. In front of it is an extensive cutting-up stage or platform, and sloping down from this into the water a smooth-planked way, up which the carcasses are drawn. Two whales, partly cut up, were on the platform when we arrived, and another, anchored a few yards from shore, was hauled up while we were there. Mr. Collins, the superintendent, had this one measured, at my request, and it was found to be sixty-eight feet four and one-half inches in length, and its weight was estimated, by Mr. Collins, to be seventy-two tons.

In these modern factories every part of the whale is utilized. The oil and whalebone of commerce are very valuable, and the manufacture of the carcass into guano after the oil has been extracted, is an industry in itself. Until recently the oil-freed carcass was considered useless refuse. It was towed fifty miles out to sea and abandoned. The law required this, that the fishing-grounds might not be polluted. But a voyage of fifty miles to sea and back again is costly, and through experiment it was learned not only that this expense might be saved, but that it was possible to manufacture the refuse into a valuable commodity.

## 12 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

So every part of the whale is turned to account except the smell. Human ingenuity cannot control that; it is too strong. This ghost of departed leviathans, as big as many leviathans combined, haunts the air for miles around a whale factory, and does not resemble lavender or lilac or other sweet perfumes in the least.

Attached to the Hawkes Harbor whale factory is the little steamer *Cachelat*, and she was in port when we arrived. At her bow a harpoon cannon was mounted. From this the harpoon, containing an explosive bomb, is fired into the whale. If well aimed, it reaches the whale's "life," as the whalers say, and the bomb exploding kills instantly. The harpoon, before being discharged from the cannon, is attached to the vessel by a line, and thus the carcass, which is prevented from sinking, is hauled alongside and lashed to the vessel, and then taken to the factory. Only one of these vessels is permitted to operate in connection with any single factory, and the law demands that each factory be located at least fifty miles from the next one.

Whaling on the Labrador coast began early in the sixteenth century. The Basques were the first to undertake it actively here, as they were the first to take advantage of the Labrador fisheries. Later came the British, Americans and Newfoundlanders. American whalers ceased activities on the Labrador coast, however, so long ago as 1807, and all of the present-day Labrador fisheries are, I believe, controlled by Newfoundland interests.

It was not until the year 1900 that the modern methods, above outlined, were introduced here from Norway, and it was then, and since, that the factories were built and the industry for a time grew immensely. Previously the old-fashioned methods of row-boat and hand harpoon were the only ones employed, and there are many to-day who bemoan the modern innovations. By the year 1904 a marked decrease in whales had occurred, due very largely, if not wholly, to increased destruction, and this resulted in the closing of some Newfoundland factories.

Thirty tons of the odoriferous whale's meat were taken aboard the *Erik*, and stored in bins on deck. Even there it smelled to high heaven, and as the warm July sun beat down upon it in the days that followed, its presence in our midst was never forgotten.

At two o'clock the following morning Norton and I launched our power whale-boat, and with Harold Bartlett, second mate on the *Erik*, and Larned, ran to the bottom of the Bay, seventeen miles, to try our rods at the mouth of a tumbling stream. My first endeavor was for salmon, but two hours' effort failed to reward me with a single rise. Then I turned my attention to trout and was more successful, landing fourteen fine sea trout and a speckled brook trout which weighed four and a half pounds. It was a beauty!

So far from the coast mosquitoes and black flies were terrible—simply beyond description—both in numbers and activity. They came upon us in clouds and attacked every exposed part of our faces and

## 14 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

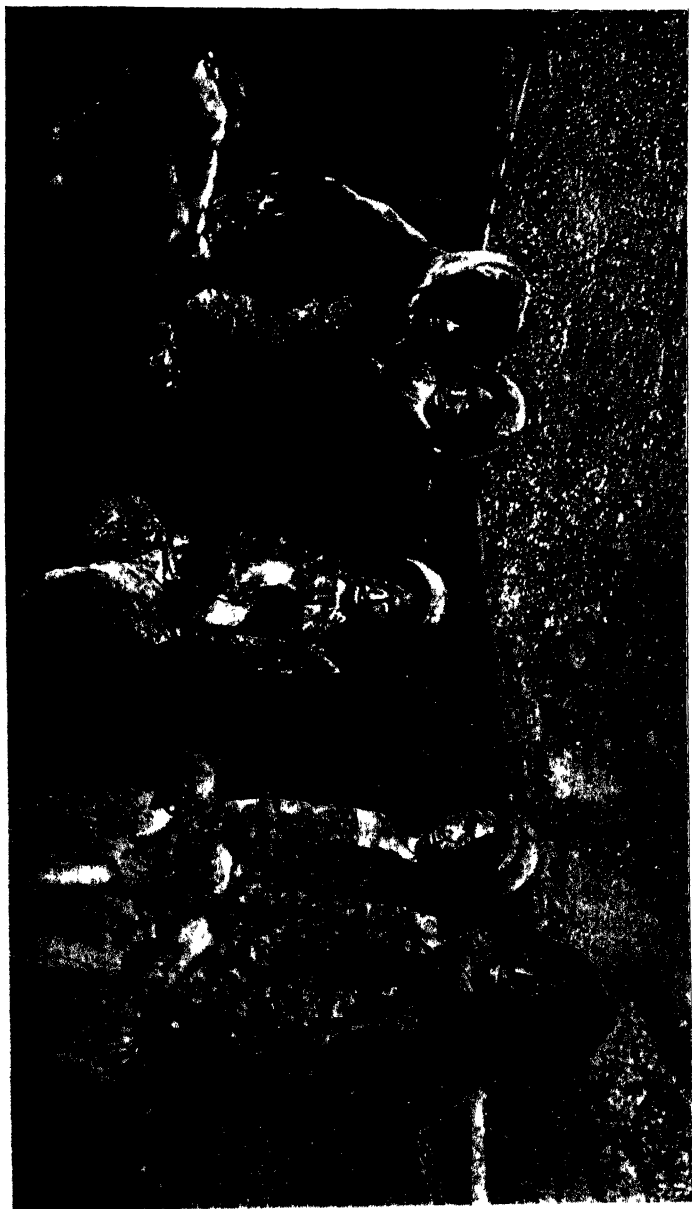
hands. Even our head-nets offered small protection, for in some way the insects managed to get through them.

When we reached the *Erik* in the evening, we found that the *Roosevelt* had arrived during our absence, and the two ships were impatiently awaiting our return. Anchors were heaved at once, and away we steamed to Turnavik.

The following day was clear, the sea smooth and dotted with innumerable icebergs. The two ships raced for Turnavik, first one ahead, then the other, but the *Roosevelt*, with all sails set and a strong southwest wind, had the advantage finally, and beat us by half an hour.

We arrived at eight-thirty in the evening, and immediately launched a boat and went ashore to be cordially and heartily welcomed by Captain William Bartlett, the father of Captain Bob Bartlett of the *Roosevelt*, and Captain Sam's brother. He owns Turnavik, which is a cod-fishing station. Here the *Roosevelt* took aboard ten sacks of salt and all the sealskin boots that could be had. I purchased two pairs of boots for myself, and through Captain Bartlett's kindness obtained a suitable stick of timber out of which I desired to make a boom for our whale-boat.

Several years before this I had been with Captain Will Bartlett on a sealing voyage, and our meeting now called up many delightful reminiscences. That sealing voyage was my first experience in the ice fields, and it was then I had my first taste of the



A GROUP OF PEARY'S ESKIMOS





rugged life of the north seas. It was a pleasant experience and left with me a remembrance of its inexplicable charm, and a desire to return to it and enjoy again a season of its wild, fascinating freedom.

When the *Erik* steamed out of Turnavik Harbor the next morning a stiff northwest wind was blowing, the air was raw and the sea rough. The wind rose to a gale during the day, and we finally began to ship so many seas that danger of losing our deck cargo of coal and whale meat shut us down to half speed until late in the afternoon, when we ran into an ice floe, with its calming effect.

Out of the ice again the sea ran heavy and we were held down to half speed. The whale's meat, however, was not. It was decaying at more than normal speed, with the result that its odor permeated everything, and followed us everywhere. There was no getting away from that smell; it followed us into the farthest corners of the ship. Like an evil spirit it haunted us continually, even as we slept. At length our food tasted of it. One day a particularly heavy sea broke the bins in which it was stored, and ten or fifteen tons of the half rotten flesh was spread over the deck. What a mess! It was so ripe and tender that it would scarcely hold together to be handled, and the poor sailors had more than their share of trouble in endeavoring to capture and confine it again. To think of it at this distance is amusing. But then—it was a horror!

But there were calm, pleasant days, and at such times, and whenever conditions permitted, Norton

## 18 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

and I busied ourselves putting our whale-boat in good condition. We calked and painted it, and I planed down the stick obtained at Turnavik, fashioning it into a boom which we fitted.

On July 27th a heavy fog, which had attended us for several hours, lifted, and lo! there lay Greenland, her high, rugged coast line topped with snow, with here and there a glimpse of her interior ice cap.

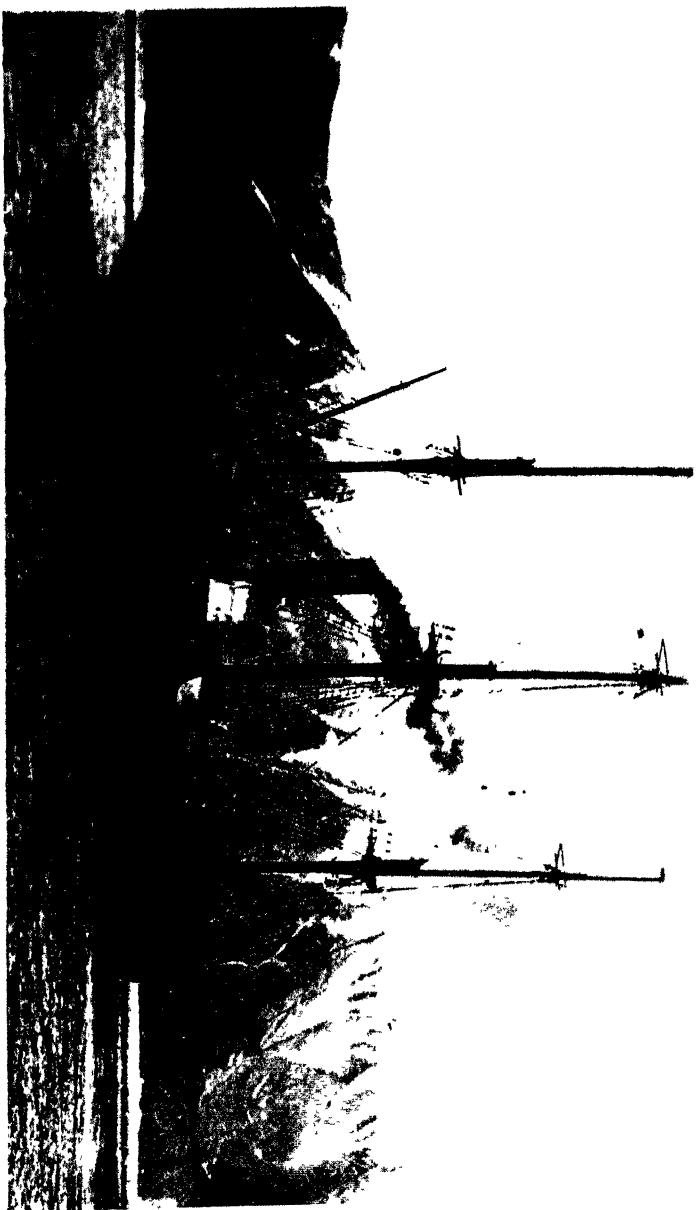
No night came now. We were in the latitude of continuous day, and presently the sun made his circle without once in the twenty-four hours dipping below the horizon. How weird and uncanny it was! On the twenty-eighth we crossed the magic circle and were at last literally within the charmed area of the Arctic.

Two schools of whales were passed. I counted eight of the monsters blowing at one time, in one of the schools. The other school was very large. One of the whales blew within thirty yards of the *Erik*. We all ran for our rifles to get a shot at him when he rose again, but when he did he was out of range.

Hundreds of water fowl circled about, or dotted the sea, many of them feeding on the oily matter that dripped from the whale meat on the *Erik's* deck.

Presently we were running along the Disco Island coast, which lay about six miles off our starboard. Most of the coast appeared to be over two thousand feet high, and was covered with ice and snow, and in a number of places the interior ice cap could be easily discerned through our glasses. Disco Island, lying off the southwest coast of Greenland, is about eighty-





THE MAINE IN STAR HARBOR

five miles in length, and supports three Danish settlements.

Icebergs were becoming more numerous. Great numbers of them, some of massive proportions and assuming fantastic shapes, dotted the sea, while the coast was lined with stranded ones. As we steamed northward into Melville Bay we passed very close to one of immense size—close enough to be impressed by its proportions, and to appreciate the beautiful green and peacock blue colorings of its crystal depths. Upon its top and its sides perched myriads of birds.

Rain fell heavily on the evening of July 30th, but shortly before midnight the sun came out clear and beautiful, and the following day was one of the most delightful of the trip—warm, almost balmy, with the sea as smooth as glass, and thousands of little auks were hovering about or flying in bunches toward the land.

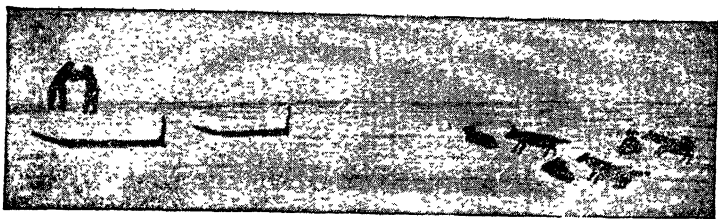
Early in the afternoon Cape York was sighted, though as yet fifty miles or so distant; and not until eleven o'clock at night did we run close in under her cliffs. The wind had risen now to so stiff a breeze that it was not advisable to attempt to launch a boat. Here we lay until early morning, when long blasts of the whistle were blown in the hope of arousing natives. No life was visible, however, and after three hours of futile effort, we were under steam again, headed for North Star Bay, the nearest harbor, where it was hoped we should overtake the *Roosevelt*.

At North Star Bay we were equally unsuccessful in arousing natives, and as the *Roosevelt* was not there

## 22 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

our prow was turned toward Walstenholme Sound. Here again the whistle was blown, and presently we were rewarded by seeing a boat shoot out from shore and pull for us. It contained fourteen Eskimos, and when it drew alongside all climbed aboard. An old Eskimo came to the bridge to act as pilot, and under his guidance the *Erik* felt her way into harbor, anchor was dropped, and we were at last on our first hunting grounds, where I was destined to tarry through the long Arctic night and experience many adventures in an Arctic winter among the Eskimos.





## II

### FAREWELL TO THE SHIPS

MANY days' imprisonment on board ship, with enforced idleness and lack of exercise, made us over eager to be away. The harbor was rugged and romantic, and its waters, calm and beautiful, were dotted with thousands of water fowl—brant, eider ducks, gulls, looms and sea pigeons. It was very attractive, and as soon as the anchor was dropped Norton, Larned, the chief engineer and myself launched our power boat and spent several hours cruising around and exploring our surroundings, before returning to the ship with some eider ducks which we had killed and which proved a very welcome addition to the ship's menu.

Here Norton and I left the others, took aboard two Eskimos, and visited the Eskimo village on the mainland. It was situated on a round, flat-topped hill. The people, attired in fur clothing and with long, coarse, black hair, appealed to our unaccustomed eyes as very fantastic indeed. Their round, smiling faces shone with grease and good nature and, reflecting childlike simplicity, left no doubt of our welcome. Nearly all of them had a store of fox skins, narwhal tusks, walrus tusks and other valuable products of



## 24 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

the hunt to trade with Mr. Peary for such necessities or luxuries as arms, ammunition, tobacco and so on. A little tobacco, for instance, will go a long way toward purchasing the assistance of an Eskimo, and if he is entirely out of the weed, he will exchange for it nearly anything he has, except his fire-arms.

Early on the morning of August third the *Roosevelt* arrived from Cape York with fifty Eskimos, men, women and children, and one hundred and seventy dogs on board, all picked up at Meteorite Island and destined to Cape Sheridan to assist in the Polar undertaking. This conglomeration of Eskimo and dog gave the *Roosevelt* an odor quite distinctively her own, but still in force and power of penetration not to be compared with that of the *Erik*, with her whale meat. Nothing could quite attain to that.

Shortly after the *Roosevelt's* arrival Mr. Peary paid a visit to the *Erik*, and arranged a walrus hunt for Norton, Larned and myself, assigning three Eskimos to guide and assist us. Some provisions were placed in our whale-boat, as it was quite uncertain how long we should be absent, and without delay we were off.

Three hours up the Sound, two large bull walrus were sighted on a small cake of ice. We matched for shots and Larned and I won. Approaching as close as expedient to the sleeping game without the risk of startling it, Larned and I each designated his animal and fired together. My shot was a lucky one and my bull was killed instantly, but Larned, less fortunate, only wounded his. One of the Eskimos har-



CAPTAIN SAM HARTLEY IN COMMAND OF THE ERM



pooned it, and as it took to the water the ice turned over, and to my chagrin the bull that I had killed slipped off and sank before it could be secured. The wounded one, fast to the harpoon line, was killed after Larned had put ten shots into it. I have never seen any animal with so much vitality. It appears to make no difference how much lead one puts into a walrus, it will not prove fatal unless placed within a certain radius in the head. The best and surest shot is about six inches behind the eye.

The walrus was towed ashore, an exceedingly slow job, and then with a rope attached to it we attempted to haul it out of the water. But the combined effort of the six of us was not sufficient to budge it, and we were finally forced to leave it grounded, and anchored to shore by harpoon lines. I should estimate that the carcass weighed fully two thousand pounds, and it had a very fair pair of tusks.

No more walrus were sighted, and we made a visit to Saunders Island, where there is one of the largest rookeries of Arctic looms<sup>1</sup> and gulls on the Greenland coast. On approaching the island we discovered it to be simply alive with birds. I had never seen anything to equal. When a gun was fired millions of them rose on the wing from the perpendicular cliffs. The sky overhead was literally shut from view, and the air was filled with their shrill cries. Thirty eider ducks and sixty-three looms were killed. The latter had a decidedly fishy flavor, and were not very toothsome.

<sup>1</sup> Guillemot.

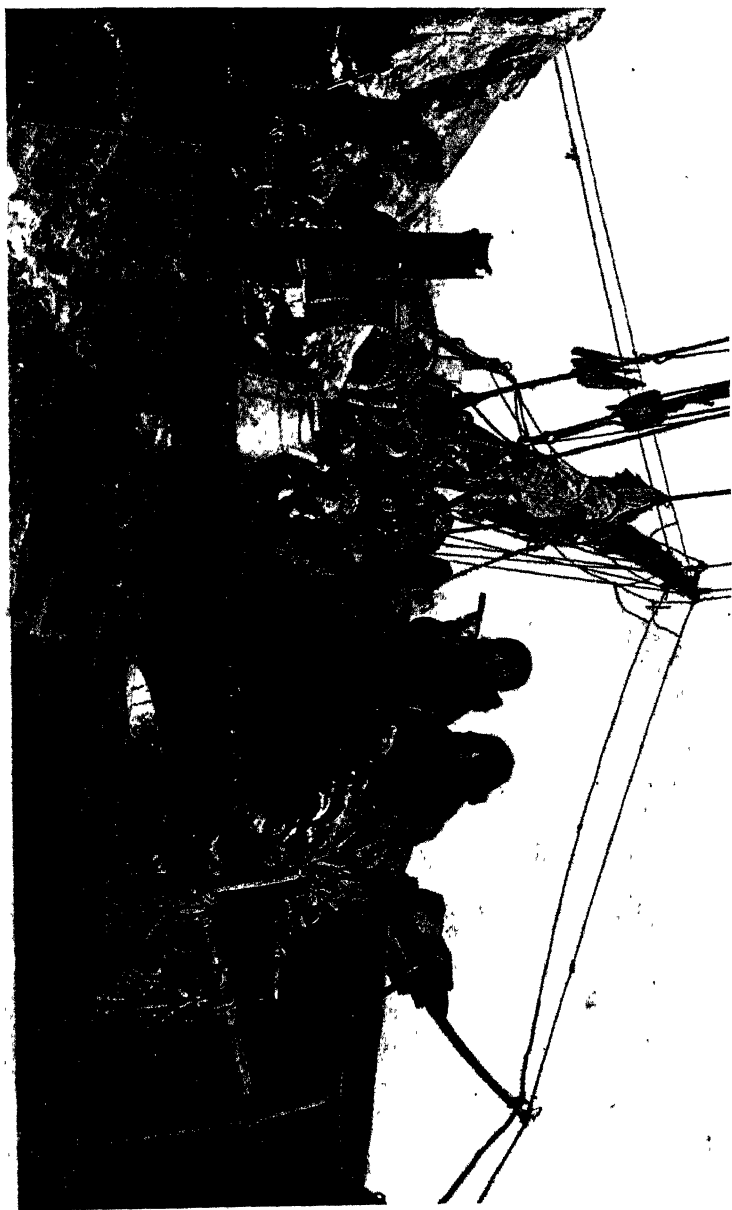
## 28 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

On our return to the ship a halt was made to remove the head of the bull walrus, and the three Eskimos took advantage of the occasion to gorge themselves on raw meat.

The following morning I met with a painful, though fortunately not serious accident. While attempting to start the motor in our power-boat the handle on the fly-wheel flew back and struck me a stinging blow on the knee. The knee pained severely and I feared at first it was broken; but Dr. Goodsall (surgeon of the expedition) upon examination pronounced the bones intact, though he advised me to remain quiet for a time. Then, to add to my afflictions, I succeeded in cutting one of my fingers rather severely. Altogether it was my unlucky day, and put me temporarily in bad shape for hunting.

Ten families of Eskimos, and sixty-three dogs, destined to take part in the Polar dash, were taken aboard the *Erik*, and the two ships hove anchor to cruise for walrus, a large supply of the meat being needed for the Polar party. None was seen, however, up to midnight, and then the *Roosevelt* headed directly for Etah, while the *Erik* turned into Whale Sound to search for cow walrus and their young.

Early on the morning of the sixth a large number of the animals were sighted on the ice, and all hands were called. Norton and Larned went with another party, while the boatswain and two Eskimos accompanied me in the power-boat. My injured knee was very painful, but I could not miss this walrus hunt, and besides I felt greatly in need of exercise.



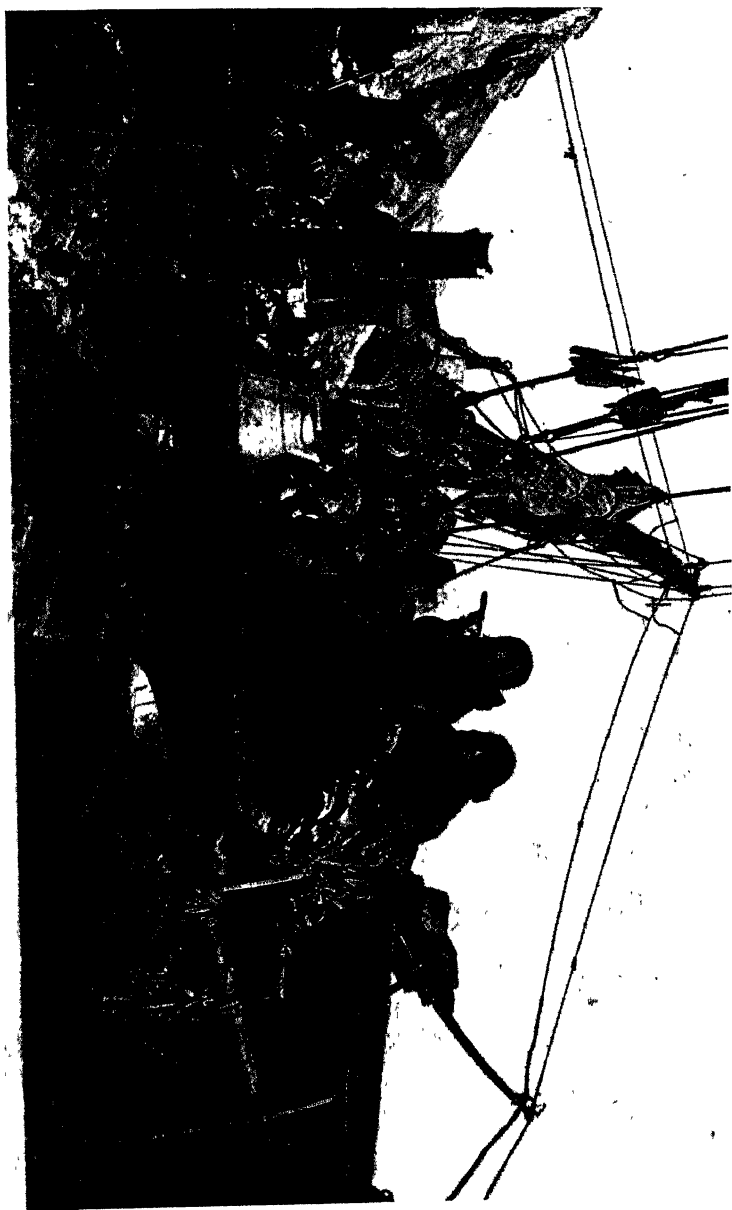
## 28 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

On our return to the ship a halt was made to remove the head of the bull walrus, and the three Eskimos took advantage of the occasion to gorge themselves on raw meat.

The following morning I met with a painful, though fortunately not serious accident. While attempting to start the motor in our power-boat the handle on the fly-wheel flew back and struck me a stinging blow on the knee. The knee pained severely and I feared at first it was broken; but Dr. Goodsall (surgeon of the expedition) upon examination pronounced the bones intact, though he advised me to remain quiet for a time. Then, to add to my afflictions, I succeeded in cutting one of my fingers rather severely. Altogether it was my unlucky day, and put me temporarily in bad shape for hunting.

Ten families of Eskimos, and sixty-three dogs, destined to take part in the Polar dash, were taken aboard the *Erik*, and the two ships hove anchor to cruise for walrus, a large supply of the meat being needed for the Polar party. None was seen, however, up to midnight, and then the *Roosevelt* headed directly for Etah, while the *Erik* turned into Whale Sound to search for cow walrus and their young.

Early on the morning of the sixth a large number of the animals were sighted on the ice, and all hands were called. Norton and Larned went with another party, while the boatswain and two Eskimos accompanied me in the power-boat. My injured knee was very painful, but I could not miss this walrus hunt, and besides I felt greatly in need of exercise.







We were fearful at first that the noisy motor would frighten the walrus, but soon found that they apparently did not notice it in the least, and we were able to approach easily within striking distance. With harpoon and rifle I succeeded in killing seventeen in ten hours, several of them with excellent heads. We had four harpooned at one time, and landed them all. Norton and Larned secured ten between them, while some thirty more were killed by others, a material addition to the supplies of the expedition. Walrus were very plentiful indeed along the north shore, and some of them showed fight by charging the boat. One of them, in fact, stuck a tusk through the gunwale of our whale-boat on the starboard side.

A dead walrus will sink at once, and it was, therefore, our rule to harpoon before shooting, unless the animal was securely settled on an ice pan. One end of a line was attached to the harpoon and the other end to an inflated sealskin. When a walrus was harpooned the sealskin float was thrown overboard from the boat. It always indicated the position of the walrus, and when the animal was finally killed prevented it from sinking beyond recovery.

With her deck covered with carcasses the *Erik* headed up Inglefield Gulf to Orlik Bay, at the head of which good caribou hunting was promised. We anchored near the mouth of the Bay, opposite the little Eskimo village of *Kangerderlooksoak*.

The power boat was made ready at once. Tent, provisions, and necessary paraphernalia loaded into it, and with eight Eskimo guides Norton, Larned

## 32 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

and I attempted to reach a point some ten miles up the Bay, behind which it was expected caribou would be found. The ice, however, was too heavy for our little boat to negotiate, and we therefore changed our course and made a landing on the opposite shore, where camp was pitched in a romantic spot at the edge of a mountainous country, with the ice cap behind plainly visible, and the ice-dotted waters of the bay stretching out before.

A cold rain had set in and we turned into our sleeping-bags to rest. We arose at seven in the morning for a hasty breakfast. The rain had ceased, and presently the sun burst through the mist to announce a propitious day for the hunt.

Behind the camp the hills rise sharply, and above is a wide, rock strewn valley which leads back into the country. At the top of the hill we separated, Norton and Larned each taking two Eskimos, I four, and our parties turned in different directions.

My injured knee was very painful and made walking extremely difficult, but I never hunted harder in my life. For sixteen hours I traveled over the rocky country, scouring it for caribou. There were plenty of signs, but not a glimpse of a single animal did I get, and with my knee paining severely at length returned to camp. The others had not yet arrived, and one of the Eskimos borrowed my .22 automatic rifle and killed three large hares while I made tea.

I had just eaten supper and lain down when Larned came in with the announcement that he had killed seven caribou and seventeen ptarmigans. He

had run into a fine herd of caribou ten miles back from camp, and got all but three of them. Norton, who soon joined us, had met with little better luck, however, than I, having seen only a fawn, which he killed.

Caribou steaks were soon sizzling in the pan, and over a sumptuous and appetizing meal, before turning in to sleep, we discussed our experiences and agreed that the walking in this country, with its steep mountains and loose stones, was as hard as any of us had ever encountered.

While Larned superintended the packing in of the caribou meat and heads by the Eskimos, I investigated, some distance away, a rookery of burgher-master gulls. This is the largest and to my mind the handsomest of the Arctic birds. I found them in great numbers on the rocks, and watched them for some time.

When I finally returned to camp we at once proceeded to put everything in readiness for prompt departure to the ship as soon as the packers came in with their burdens; but the Eskimos were so weary when they arrived that sleep was demanded before they would consent to start, and when we did finally get away the weather had turned raw and cold, with squalls of snow and rain.

Fortunately the *Erik* had moved to a position considerably closer than where we left her, and anchored near another Eskimo village, where she had come to get the ivory tusks secured by natives in a recent successful narwhal hunt. This ivory is of considerable

## 34 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

value, and much sought after by traders, though of little use to the natives, who hunt the narwhal for its food qualities alone.

Presently we were pushing northward en route to Etah, halting only to indulge in another walrus hunt near Northumberland Island. At midnight on August twelfth the *Erik* steamed into Etah and tied up alongside the *Roosevelt*, which had preceded us and was engaged in landing stores. She had improved very much in appearance and cleanliness since we had last seen her. The dogs had been cleared from her decks and placed upon a small island a quarter mile above, and the decks had been washed down and generally cleaned up.

Here we found Rudolf Franke, who had been left by Dr. Cook in charge of provisions. The poor fellow was suffering from scurvy, and was in pretty bad shape physically. Dressed in furs, hair hanging to shoulders, a heavy tangled beard, and generally unkempt, he more nearly resembled my ideas of the prehistoric man than any individual I have ever seen.

It is a great hare country around Etah, and our party took advantage of the opportunity to hunt them. We found them very wild, however, and with my .22 rifle I succeeded in bringing down only three. They are pure white, with just a small tip of black on each ear. The largest one killed weighed twelve and a quarter pounds. The flesh is very toothsome indeed, and the fur fine and warm. The Eskimos cure the pelts, and out of them make socks, wearing the fur





INCAMPED ON A NARWHAL HUNT

side next the foot. At this season, however, the fur is not useful, as they are still shedding hair.

With two Eskimo companions I made an excursion to the head of the bay to try the trout-fishing. First I tried flies, then casting a spoon with a bit of pork on it, but did not get a rise, and finally gave it up as hopeless.

Never in my life have I seen so many birds at one time as here. This is the home of the little auk, which breeds in the cliffs that line the shore. The air was full of them most of the time—thousands upon thousands of them—darting hither and thither. The Eskimos capture great numbers of them in nets, and from the skins make warm shirts. From one hundred to one hundred and fifty are required for each shirt. The skins are first thoroughly dried, then the women chew the flesh side until all oil is extracted and the skin is soft and pliable, and ready to be sewn into the garment with sinew. In preparing seal and other skins for sewing the women always resort to the chewing process.

Upon my return from the unsuccessful fishing expedition Mr. Peary invited me to his room on the *Roosevelt*, and we enjoyed a pleasant hour's chat over a quart of champagne—a great treat in this Arctic wilderness of ice and desolation.

It was all hustle and bustle now to get away—the *Erik* on her homeward trip to civilization, the *Roosevelt* under the guidance of that inimitable navigator, Captain Bob Bartlett, into the treacherous ice packs



## 38 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

to the northward. Norton, Larned and I, with four Eskimos, went forty-two miles south in the power-boat to Arawagauarui Point to bring up a cache to the main base. The shore was lined with heavy ice and icebergs filled the coves, and constant watchfulness was necessary to prevent the boat being crushed, but finally the cache was reached and the boat hauled to a safe position.

Before we were ready for our return, however, the tide had left the boat high and dry, and much time and a great deal of energy and patience were expended in relaunching her. At length we succeeded, but to our consternation found that she had sprung a leak, and water flowed into her faster than we could bail it out. With a hatchet I ripped off the flooring and discovered that in hauling her down over the rocks two large holes had been rammed through her bottom.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention, and so it was now. With no repair materials nearer than Etah, we stuffed pieces of raw deer meat and fat into the holes, battened it down tight, and found our experiment successful, for though the boat still leaked badly, and the Eskimos would not risk cutting points, but insisted upon hugging the shore, we did very well, and kept afloat by constant use of the pump and by bailing. Walrus were very plentiful on the ice, but we did not molest them, and finally, after a hard and rather eventful trip, hailed Etah and the ships with delight.

With the assistance of our power-boat a number



CARRYING DEER MEAT OUT OF ROCKY COUNTRY



of the dogs were now transferred from the island where they had been landed to the *Roosevelt*, and the last preparations for departure were completed.

My ambition to secure musk-ox trophies had not been realized, and though I had hardly dared to hope at the outset for such good fortune, my disappointment was now so keen that suddenly I decided to be put ashore for a year's big game hunting under the shadow of the Pole. This seemed especially feasible, as a cache of provisions was to be left at Etah and another at Annootok, forty miles to the northward. I expressed my desire to Mr. Peary, who very readily and considerately granted my request to be permitted to remain.

All was ready at last, and at half past four on the afternoon of August eighteenth the *Roosevelt* hoisted anchor and steamed slowly northward with her crew of twenty-two men, forty-nine Eskimos, men, women and children (Eskimos will not leave their families behind them), and two hundred and forty-six dogs—the largest number of dogs ever pressed into service by any Polar expedition. As she passed us we gave her a royal salute, and she returned it with a will, all the crew and Eskimos on deck waving and cheering. And so she melted into the northern mists and faded from view.

I turned my attention at once to the collection of my effects preparatory to going ashore from the *Erik*. Captain Sam Bartlett and members of the crew endeavored to dissuade me from what they looked upon as a mad undertaking. But the spirit of the North

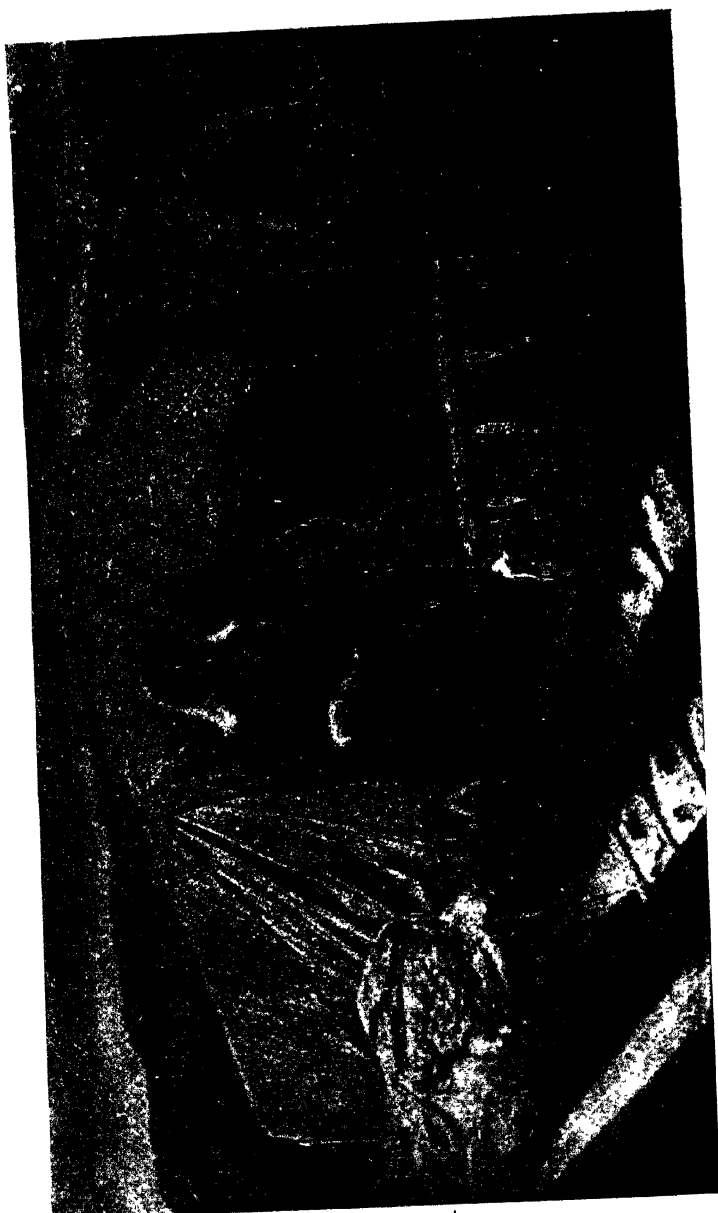
## 42 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

had taken possession of me. My mind was made up, and I would stay.

With no previous intention of facing an Arctic winter, I had made no provision for it upon leaving home. I was short of heavy underclothing particularly, and Captain Sam helped me in this respect with some from his own wardrobe. The carpenter and boatswain of the *Erik* set about erecting a house from provision boxes, which when finished measured ten by twelve feet in size, with a height of eight feet at the peak of the roof and six feet on the sides. The door looked to the east. The crew and remaining Eskimos landed coal and supplies, and at length the *Erik* was ready to sail.

I was called at five o'clock on the morning of August twenty-first. The sky was clear, the day beautiful and a light south wind fanned our cheeks. Two hours later anchor was hoisted and the ship began to move. I remained aboard for three-quarters of an hour; then the ship came to, a whale-boat, which had been in tow, was hauled alongside, good-by was said to all on board, and in company with five Eskimos I dropped into the boat. The *Erik's* engines began to pulse, her flag dipped, three blasts of her whistle blew in salute, all on board waved farewell, and she headed south.

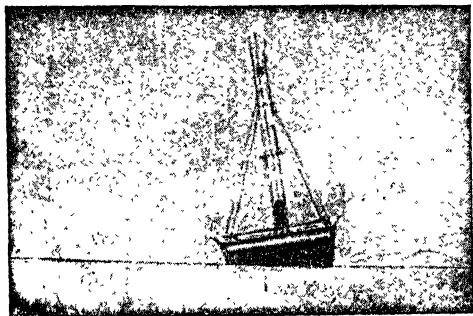
I sat in my boat and watched her until the last bit of hazy smoke from the funnels had dropped below the southern horizon. Then I realized that I was marooned in the most desolate region of the earth, among a race who spoke a strange tongue, and that



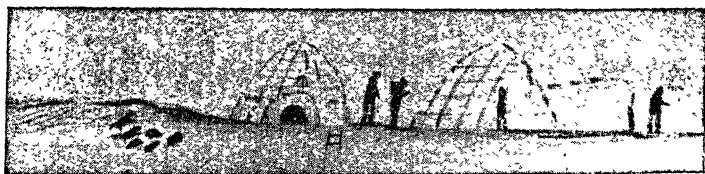
THE AUTHOR'S SHACK AT ETAH



except for two of Peary's men left in charge of his stores at Annootok I was the only white man in these parts. And there was no escape for nearly a year—I had burned my bridges behind me.







### III

#### AT ANNOOTOK

**N**O matter how conventional a man may be, how wedded to luxury and the good things of civilization, somewhere in his innermost soul he harbors the primordial instinct—the instinct of the chase—the instinct that urges him on when Nature challenges him to open combat in her wild, uninhabited places. He may not admit or perhaps realize that he possesses even in the slightest degree this instinct of primordial man, but it is there, nevertheless. He has received it as an inheritance in perpetuity from those savage ancestors of his who lived in prehistoric ages and whose everyday business it was to pit their human intelligence against the sagacity of the brute creation. It may be said in proof of this that a white man is transformed into an Indian very quickly, so far as ready adoption of the Indian's mode of life is concerned; but to transform an Indian into a white man is a process of evolution that requires generations.

I must say that when I found myself alone on the bleak rocks of Northern Greenland with the Eskimo representatives of my prehistoric progenitors, and with no other object in view than the hunt and to

meet and combat Nature in this her most desolate habitation, I felt some uncertainty of the wisdom of my step. I climbed a hill that rises behind the shack at Etah, and sat down to think.

Was I sorry or not that I had thus suddenly renounced present-day civilization for an indefinite period, and taken up instead the primitive life of the northernmost Eskimo? It was too late now to turn back and I made up my mind to make the most of the adventures and experiences that my new surroundings should offer. Upon consideration indeed I was very glad I had remained. I looked about me and viewed with delight the mighty expanse of Arctic wilderness spread at my feet, austere and rugged, but yet possessing a beauty and a grandeur born of its very desolation, and distinctively its own. And it was an impressive and fascinating thought that here lay a region thousands upon thousands of square miles in extent, unpeopled save by the handful of natives who were to be my companions, and by the wild beasts we were to hunt and must to some extent depend upon for our living. In these wilds primeval I too would be an Eskimo and adopt the Eskimo life, which is as free from convention as anything the imagination can picture!

And so I entered upon the life with a lightness of heart and freedom from care that was exalting. My reasoning led me into a frame of mind that bred contentment, and my first sleep in the shack at Etah, wrapped in a primitive bed of musk-ox skins, was as sound and peaceful as a child's.

## 48 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

After a most refreshing rest I crossed the bay to hunt hare, and unexpectedly came upon three graves, one of them marked with a flat stone bearing the inscription: "August Sontag. Died December 29, 1860." The two other graves were unmarked by head-stones, and I resolved to return later and fix up decently the graves of these Arctic explorers, for they had been long neglected.

This whole section, from Etah northward, has a peculiar interest in the history of Polar research. Smith Sound has witnessed the struggles and defeat of many expeditions and the rocks and cliffs that line its shores on either side, could they but speak, might tell the story of many tragedies.

In a long tramp over the hills that day I killed three hares. I had intended upon my return to go walrus hunting, but a high north wind sprang up and rendered this impossible; so I busied myself banking up my shack with stones and gravel, and then sallied forth for another walk, with Sipsu, one of my Eskimo companions.

Thus my time was occupied for several days. More banking-up had to be done about the shack, provisions had to be cared for and piled where they would be snug and dry, safe from the driving storms of wind and snow to come later; and our old whale-boat—not the power-boat—had to be painted. With all this to do I had no lonesome days and no regretful hours.

It had been arranged that another supply base should be established at Annootok, and we were to





THE WHALE-BOAT IN A DANGEROUS POSITION

transport the supplies in boats. Annootok lies on the Greenland shore of Smith Sound, almost directly opposite Cape Sabine, and forty miles north of Etah. It is the most northerly Eskimo settlement in the world. Here the hunters of the Highland tribe gather with their families in the autumn, to remain throughout the winter, that they may take advantage of the abundance of land and sea game to be found in the surrounding region. This was the settlement that the members of the Lady Franklin Bay Expedition would have reached had their efforts to cross Smith Sound succeeded, and here they would have found shelter and succor. From Annootok on a very clear day, one may see in dim outline Cape Sabine, in Ellesmere Land, rising beyond the ice-choked waters, where so many of Greely's brave men gave up their lives.

Kulutinguah's *kooner*,<sup>1</sup> Tongwe, set about immediately the *Erik* was gone, to make my winter clothes, and presently my *kuletar*<sup>2</sup> and *nannookers*,<sup>3</sup> the former made of reindeer skin, the latter of bear skin, were ready, and I found them very warm and well fitting indeed. Kulutinguah was one of my Eskimo friends, others of whom I shall introduce from time to time, and with whom I experienced some lively adventures.

Now that I was provided with suitable clothing,

<sup>1</sup> Woman.

<sup>2</sup> The hooded garment of the Eskimos which takes the place of our coat. It has no buttons, however, and is pulled over the head like a shirt.

<sup>3</sup> Trousers.

## 52 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

I prepared at once to go to Annotok, and on August twenty-fifth launched the whale-boat and with five Eskimos headed northward.

A stiff breeze was blowing, and when we passed the point above Etah, perceptibly increased. Sails were set and we were making good progress when, without warning, a puff broke the step which held the mast in place, and before the sail could be lowered two boards in the bottom of the boat split, and the boat began to leak so badly that I feared it would fill with water and sink, for it was heavily loaded, before we could make the nearest land, which we headed for at once. Fortune favored us, however, and though crew and outfit got a thorough soaking, we reached shore safely.

Though the temperature was but thirty-one degrees, the air was cutting cold and I was chilled through with the wetting. In view of this, the steadily increasing gale, and the fact that we had no facilities for making repairs, it was decided to walk back to Etah, and return in the morning, if weather favored, to mend the boat and resume our journey. Six miles it was over the hills, and a hard six miles, too, though the exercise was needed and wholesome.

That night I will long remember! With every minute the wind increased in velocity until it attained the proportions of a terrific gale, and at the same time the temperature fell rapidly. The roof got loose and we endeavored to fix it. Then the stove-pipe blew off, and in the gale it was found impossi-



TWO HUNSMEN OF THE HIGHLAND TRIBE





ble to get it in place again. At length, only partially clothed, I had to climb out on the roof, to hold that in place until it could be secured, and in the process was half frozen. Then, as the last straw, the fire went out. The only way then to get warm was by retreat to my sleeping-bag, and so the night was passed.

There was no abatement of the wind next day, and traveling was impossible; but good use was made of the time in piling rocks and bags of coal against the front of the house to strengthen it against the blast, and in securing and weather-proofing the roof.

On the twenty-seventh, however, the wind so far abated that we made another start for Annootok. Repairs were made on the boat, and after fifteen hours' rowing against a head wind, we had the satisfaction of arriving.

Here I had expected to find a fairly comfortable house—the one occupied by Dr. Cook during the previous winter; but the shack, built of boxes, was dripping with moisture, dirty and altogether uninhabitable. There was but one way to clean it, air it properly and dry it—take it down and rebuild it on another spot. And the next morning I set about the work. As I dismantled the old hut I had the Eskimos carry the boxes and barrels out of which it was constructed to a dry, level place two hundred yards farther south, and there I laid the foundation for a new structure. The old house was eighteen by fourteen feet; my new one, by inside measurement, twelve feet three inches by ten feet two inches.

## 56 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

I arranged it for a very low roof, that it might be more easily heated and kept warm.

Mr. Peary, as I have said, had left his boatswain and a young Newfoundlander named Billy Pritchard in charge of the supplies unloaded from the *Roosevelt*, and when I had my new home well under way the boatswain came to my assistance. I never worked harder in my life, and when I was ready to turn in for the night had the satisfaction of seeing the walls of the house in place and the frame ready for the roof.

Five hours' work the next day, and I was rewarded with a very comfortable looking dwelling, though there were many cracks to admit the wind. A few strips of boards were still on hand unused, but the boatswain advised reserving them for firewood. Upon consideration, however, I decided that the boards would produce more warmth by shutting out the wind and snow than by burning in the stove, and therefore nailed the strips over the cracks as far as they would go. I had only canvas to cover the remaining openings, but these openings were low on the sides, and dirt and snow banked against them would serve to keep the storms out. That this was good judgment was proved that very night when a snow storm set in, accompanied by a northerly gale and sudden drop in temperature. It was so cold that a cup of water set down for a few minutes was found to be covered with ice.

That was a wild night, indeed, outside. Ice was passing south through Smith Sound at a rapid rate.

As the wind and tide drove the floes together, great pans rafted one upon another, crashing together with terrific noise.

The Annootok house, with only a few finishing touches to be added, was now in fairly good shape, I believed, for the winter. This was a more central point than Etah for hunting expeditions, and was to be my winter headquarters. Further provisions and supplies had to be brought up from Etah before Smith Sound became so choked with ice that boat navigation would be rendered impossible. I had still to arrange with the Eskimos to complete a winter wardrobe for me; for in this climate the only practicable clothing is skin and fur clothing such as the natives wear. For instance, if one were to attempt to wear in the low temperature of the Arctic the conventional boots and shoes of civilization, frozen feet would be the prompt result, for ordinary leather will freeze as stiff as boards, and one's feet must be dressed in pliable, though substantial, gear.

The boatswain and Billy were to go with me to Etah, and on the following day, August twenty-ninth, though there was much shifting ice in the Sound, the wind was fair, we launched our boat, and with Eskimo aids headed south.

It was very cold, and in the short time that had elapsed since our arrival at Annootok, much young ice had formed. This we found exceedingly troublesome. Once we got into a pocket—an open lead of water running between the ice and frozen over at the one end. This delayed us considerably, as it

## 58 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

forced us to turn back to its entrance to find the main lead from which it branched and through which we were working our way.

During the day the wind rose, and in spite of our manœuvring, a pan of ice was driven against the boat, a hole knocked through the side, and it began to leak so badly we were forced to tie up alongside a heavy pan, where, with much improvising, we finally succeeded in patching the hole with ham fat and a piece of tin. Thence we proceeded to Littleton Island, where I found it necessary to go ashore to warm my feet.

Here the Eskimos had a number of caches of ducks and duck eggs. The ducks were killed in June and were half rotten, while many of the eggs had young ducks in them. Both the decayed ducks and the half hatched eggs they ate raw, and with a seeming relish. I was not hungry enough to join them in the feast, and my civilized sensibilities were shocked to such an extent that it made me nearly sick to watch them.

It was a short run from Littleton Island to Etah, and upon our arrival we set about at once making everything snug for the winter, and getting in readiness our boat's cargo for the trip back to Annootok, which promised to be a journey of hazard and difficulty in the face of an influx of flocs from the northward, and of rapidly forming young ice.



ESKIMOS AT THEIR SUMMER HOME





## IV

### BUFFETED BY STORM AND ICE

THE day following our arrival at Etah, Sipsu, Kulutinguah, Kudlar, and two boys of the tribe, departed in the large boat and some *kayaks*<sup>1</sup> for a walrus hunt. I was invited to accompany them, but preferred to remain behind and get some of my things in readiness for transshipment. Besides, I was very tired. My night's rest had been broken by howling dogs. Unaccustomed as I was to this characteristic of an Eskimo settlement, I had been unable to sleep. Several times I arose and stoned the brutes into silence, but each time I was scarcely back in bed again when the howls were renewed, with increased vigor, if that were possible.

When the hunting party returned, I noticed that Sipsu did not get out of the boat with the others. His companions hurried to me at once and though as yet I had not acquired sufficient knowledge of the language to understand them readily, little by little I grasped the import of what they were saying. It appeared that Sipsu while in his kayak had harpooned a cow walrus that had young. He did not

<sup>1</sup> Native boats.



## 62 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

observe that three other walrus were near at the time. These three charged his kayak and turned him out into the water, and in their rage would have killed him with their tusks or drowned him but for the fact that the other Eskimos, who were not far away with the large boat, came to his rescue, and saved him from the infuriated animals. He was now in the boat, the Eskimos said, and they requested me to go to his assistance. Eskimos have an excellent opinion of the white man's skill as surgeon or physician, and it was up to me, inexperienced layman though I was, to prove that this faith was well founded.

Upon examination I found that Sipsu had suffered two severe gashes in his left cheek, his right ear was badly cut, and a tusk had made a large hole in his right hip. So far as I could discover, however, there were no broken bones, and for this I was profoundly thankful. I cleansed the wounds as thoroughly as possible, using a solution of bichloride of mercury, bandaged them to the best of my ability, and put him to bed. The cuts in his cheek should have been sewed up, but I feared to attempt it with the crude materials at hand.

With approaching signs of winter the Eskimos, as well as myself, were anxious to get into winter headquarters at Annootok. The boatswain and Billy had come down to Etah, and they too wished to return. In this connection it may be well to explain that the boatswain was engaged in trading with the Eskimos, collecting furs and ivory. In the

performance of his duties he was sometimes at Etah, sometimes at Annootok, and frequently absent with the Eskimos on trading or hunting expeditions. Billy also traveled much between Annootok and Etah, and now and again I had his company at one or the other of the two camps as on this occasion. Everything at Etah appeared snug enough to leave, and we began at once preparations for the journey.

On September second the weather seemed propitious, with a fair wind springing up. While the boat was being loaded, I visited Sipsu, removed the dressings from his wounds, cleansed them thoroughly, and rebandaged them. The cut in his face looked bad indeed. But there seemed nothing more that I could do for the patient, and leaving instructions with his family for future treatment of the wounds, we started—the boatswain, Billy, five Eskimos, six children and myself.

At Littleton Island the ice had come in so solidly that there was no passage to the northward and we were forced to land at Lifeboat Cove, to await movement of the pack. This landing was made two hundred yards from the place where the *Polaris* was wrecked, and along the shore I picked up several souvenirs of her—bits of copper wire and other odds and ends.

A heavy tide was running, and the roar of rafting ice was terrific, with large pans moving to the northward. Two miles from shore was an open lead of water, but we feared to enter it lest the ice movement change and the boat get nipped between the

## 64 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

masses. Many large ice islands, some of them several acres in extent and rising in ponderous volume, dotted the surface of Smith Sound. They were the product doubtless of Humboldt Glacier, a hundred miles to the northward.

In Lifeboat Cove we made a temporary bivouac, and were preparing to eat when we were joined by three women who had walked from Etah enroute to Annootok. We fed them, and they went their way, while the rest of us, after much discussion, and objection on the part of the Eskimos, turned back to Etah, as any further attempt to work our boat northward through the floe, at this time, was plainly hopeless.

A light north wind gave us a fine run back to Etah. It is a peculiarity which I observed about the winds in the vicinity of Etah, that they almost invariably blow from north or south. East or west winds rarely occur. This is doubtless due to the fact that high cliffs on either side of the sound form a sort of funnel through which the winds draw as they would through a great chimney.

Unfavorable conditions, with waters choked by ice and adverse winds, continued. Signs of winter increased daily. Until this time thousands of little auks had been seen, but suddenly they disappeared, as did the ducks and other water fowl, and now not one was to be seen. Apparently they all left at once. I missed them greatly, for their going and their absence left an ominous stillness in our world,

which seemed to presage, perhaps more than anything else, the approaching long night of darkness.

Storms now followed one another in close succession, and each seemed to gather new velocity as it broke upon us with gale or blizzard. Attempts to hunt walrus or white whale, both more or less plentiful, were too hazardous and entirely futile, though we did brave the elements and the heavy seas once or twice, only to return empty handed and thankful to escape the ever present driving ice floes. To add to my discomfort I wrenched my back badly one day, and for several days could scarcely get about.

Sipsu's wounds I dressed pretty regularly, keeping them as clean as possible to avoid gangrene, though to keep any part of an Eskimo clean is all but hopeless. Finally healing was pronounced, and on September twenty-seventh I had the satisfaction of seeing him around and well on the road to recovery.

On the ninth another attempt had been made to reach Annootok but, as in the previous instances, we were ignominiously forced to retreat in the face of heavy ice.

At this time the country was swept by a blizzard so terrific that I feared our shack would blow away. Several of the boxes utilized in its construction were actually shifted from their positions, opening up wide cracks; and the canvas roof was loosened. This led me to fear that the house at Annootok would be completely blown away. There was much work still

## 66 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

to be done on it to make it snug and firm for the winter. The snow already fallen, though sufficient in quantity for dog-traveling, had been swept off the rocks by high winds, else we should have given up the thought of going with the boat and pressed dogs and *komatik*<sup>1</sup> into service.

Several of the Eskimos, impatient to get into winter quarters at Annotok, left on foot; but I had many things to take in the boat—articles which I deemed necessary to comfort. Advantage was taken of our enforced stay at Etah to have Eskimo women make hare-skin stockings and other necessary clothing for me, for the time was at hand when they would be needed. It was even now so cold the streams were frozen solid, and the only water obtainable was melted ice or snow.

I applied myself, too, to acquiring the Eskimo language. While it is a language unique in itself, and only years of residence among the natives themselves will give one facility in the use of its many idioms, and enable one to understand a running conversation between Eskimos, it is possible in a short time to acquire a sufficient vocabulary to make oneself understood, and to understand simple statements directly addressed to one; and already I congratulated myself that my attainments were fast approaching this stage.

September sixteenth was one of those calm days that come in the midst of a long period of storm, and it seemed a propitious day for another attempt

<sup>1</sup> Sledge.

to make Annootok. The boat was launched, but again impassable ice drove us back.

It was upon our return to Etah on the evening of the sixteenth that I observed for the first time a case of *problokto* among the natives. Problokto is a form of temporary insanity to which the Highland Eskimos are subject, and which comes upon them very suddenly and unexpectedly. They are liable to have these attacks more particularly at the beginning or during the period of darkness. Tukshu began suddenly to rave upon leaving the boat. He tore off every stitch of clothing he had on, and would have thrown himself into the water of the Sound, but for the restraint of the Eskimos. He seemed possessed of supernatural strength, and it was all four men could do to hold him. With the knowledge that his madness was temporary and he would shortly be himself again, with no serious consequences to follow, I cheerfully watched his astonishing contortions. It would have been a very serious matter however had Tukshu been attacked while in the boat; and it is very serious indeed when problokto attacks one, as it sometimes does, when on the trail, or at a time when there are insufficient men to care for the afflicted one.

At a quarter to twelve that night we determined to make one more desperate effort to reach Annootok. Again the boat was launched, the cargo of heavy boxes put aboard, and with the wind dead against us, we rowed to Cape Ohlsen. It was hard work, but we made a little progress until the tide turned and began to run to the southward. With this and the

## 68 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

wind both against us we were unable to gain a foot of headway, and were forced to the shelter of Lifeboat Cove, where land was made at four o'clock in the morning. The shore rocks were very high, most of them encrusted with thick ice, and it was with difficulty that we finally found a safe place for the boat some fifty yards south of the place where the *Polaris* was wrecked.

It was no small task to remove the heavy boxes from the boat, and when it was at length accomplished, the Eskimos improvised a *tupek*<sup>1</sup> out of the sail. We divided ourselves into two-hour watches, I standing first watch. It was lonely and cold and very hard to keep awake, so I walked up and down the rocks until my watch was up at seven, after which it did not take me long to get asleep.

I must mention the marvelous sunset that illumined the sky on the night of the sixteenth. It was the most wonderful I had ever witnessed, with its gorgeous blending of colors from blood red to rich orange and orange to saffron, with brilliant purple splashes. Its duration was long, transforming our surroundings—the waters of Smith Sound, the floes, the pinnacled icebergs, and rugged shore cliffs—into a world of transcendent beauty, the glory of Heaven reflected upon earth.

When all hands were called at eleven o'clock for breakfast, the cold had increased, and snow was falling thick and fast. It was not until half-past one

<sup>1</sup> Tent.







THE BOATMAN LEAVING EIAH FOR CAPE SHERIDAN WITH PEARY IN COMMAND

that the boat was loaded and we were enabled to resume our journey. Coming from the northward were large pans of ice to be avoided. The wind, too, was against us, but the tide in our favor. Off Cairn Point heavy ice blocked our way and for two hours we were compelled to await the opening of a lead; then, when the floe parted, we rowed forward, only to discover that we were in a lake shut in by ice. This drove us back on our course three miles, where we found a sheltering cove, filled with loose ice, in which to take refuge. Here we tied up to a perpendicular wall of rock, pitched the tent in the boat as best we could, and settled for the roughest night's experience that had ever fallen to my lot.

Our two oil stoves were started and they served to mitigate our hardships somewhat, as over them Billy, the boatswain and I crouched to keep warm, while the Eskimos found nooks on shelving rock in which to stretch out and sleep. We three sat there talking and joking about our disagreeable situation until suddenly the boat gave a lunge and began to take water on the starboard side. We were all on our feet in a moment cutting down the tent to free ourselves. It was quickly discovered that the falling tide had left us on a sloping ledge high and dry. A shout brought the Eskimos to us in a hurry, all of them pretty well frightened, until they learned the cause of our trouble.

At half-past eight in the morning the ice outside began to loosen, and we pulled for Cape Inglefield. Thence watching for leads, taking advantage of

## 72 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

every opening, and with long waits, we had the satisfaction at half-past four in the evening of finding ourselves nearly opposite Annootok.

At this critical moment, when our goal seemed almost within reach, the ice began running strongly to the southward, and we had to turn and keep ahead of it. With one narrow escape from being squeezed between two large pans, we finally succeeded, by getting out of the boat and cutting our way through the ice, in effecting a landing four miles below Annootok.

Hope of proceeding further with the boat at this time was now abandoned, and the following morning, each with a heavy pack on his back, we took up the journey on foot.

It was fearful walking—everything as slippery as glass—with three high mountains to cross, and I sustained two hard falls; but finally in the evening, we reached our winter home at Annootok, where I found that my fears as to the shack were partially confirmed. The canvas roof had blown off, several of the boxes that formed the sides were blown out of position, large cracks had opened, and it was little more protection against the cold north wind than a sieve.





## V

### ON THE THRESHOLD OF THE LONG NIGHT

I WAS too tired that night to begin repairs. The stove would not draw, but after much effort we succeeded in getting sufficient fire to cook our supper; then, stiff with cold, I took refuge in my bed, to awake in the morning lying under a heavy blanket of snow that had fallen and covered me during the night.

It was cold work now rebuilding the house. With a fire in the stove within the roofless enclosure, I would drive a few nails and then run in and warm my half frozen fingers over the stove. But at length the sides were made snug again and covered with canvas, the roof was on, and a stone tunnel built, leading to the door. Without this tunnel it was found impossible to keep snow out of the place. The stonework, covered with drift, was of great advantage, also, in assisting to keep the heat confined and the house warm.

The weather was so cold that all the Eskimos of the settlement moved now into their winter homes in stone *igloos*. These igloos, covered with snow-drift, were very snug and warm. A low tunnel, some fifty feet in length, led to them, and to enter an igloo one was compelled, by the low roof of the tunnel, to

## 74 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

crawl upon hands and knees. A very strong and oppressive odor permeated the igloos, but in close, continuous contact with Eskimos one readily becomes accustomed to that.

The abandonment of the summer tupeks for winter igloos was the occasion for a kind of religious celebration. I spent two hours at this ceremony, which was conducted in Kudlar's igloo. In the weird light shed by two stone lamps in which seal and norwhal oil was burned, it was very impressive. As yet, however, I had not obtained sufficient grasp upon the language to understand the import of these exercises well enough to describe them adequately or clearly. They were, of course, heathen rites, as no Christianizing influence has as yet been brought to bear upon the Highland Eskimos. Nevertheless, they are kindly, honest, upright in their dealings, considerate of the comfort of others, self-sacrificing, and most hospitable.

When the meeting broke up in the igloo, Kulutinguah came to me and suggested that as now there was no water to be seen, and doubtless a solid pack of ice extended southward to the boat, it would be a good time to go down with dogs and komatiks for the provisions we had left there. This was exceedingly agreeable to me. Kudlar was asked to assist, and, each of them with a komatik and eight dogs, we three made the journey. This was my first dog trip, and though the going was rough I found riding behind dogs great sport.

At this time we had one of the most glorious nights

I believe I had ever experienced. The stars shone with an unusual luster. The moon, in its last quarter, cast an uncanny glow, lighting the thousand fantastically-formed icebergs, which spread out before us over Smith Sound, in such a manner that the prismatic crystal masses were transformed into brilliant, sparkling gems of huge proportions, scintillating with every color of the spectrum.

Apart from a musk-ox hunt, when the proper season should arrive, I was controlled by no definite plans during my stay in the Arctic. I was not bound to remain in any particular place, and I decided therefore to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible to accompany the Eskimos on their frequent hunting expeditions, and to put myself in close contact with their everyday life. Several of the Eskimos were preparing for a hunting trip for reindeer and bear in the vicinity of Humboldt Glacier, seventy-five or eighty miles to the northward. They told me that the year before, Kulutinguah had killed six bears and a number of deer there, and I desired at once to be of the present party. They were quite willing that I accompany them, and on a cold, clear morning, with dogs and sledges our party headed north.

Approaching Cape Leiper a broad lead covered with thin young ice was encountered, three of Kulutinguah's dogs broke through, and he barely escaped getting into the water himself. This cooled my aspirations for the present. I did not feel that the hunt would warrant me in taking a long chance of getting wet, which would certainly have resulted

## 76 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

in a severe freezing, and I quickly decided to return to Annootok and later, when the ice was stronger, join another expedition that was planned to the same region. Kudlar good-naturedly turned back with his komatik and carried my outfit to quarters.

It was now that I made a startling discovery. I found I was covered with vermin, acquired, doubtless, in the native igloos. One who comes into contact with the Eskimos cannot hope to avoid this, and no amount of effort will get rid of vermin as long as one remains in the country, for the people and their homes are literally infested with them. I accepted the situation philosophically.

My time at Annootok was spent in long walks over the surrounding country where I sometimes hunted hares, for we needed the fresh meat, but with little success in killing for they were so nearly the color of the snow that I had difficulty in seeing them before they saw me, and they were very wild.

One day in late September I accompanied three of the Eskimo boys on a fishing trip to a pond lying some four miles back of camp. Several holes were cut through the ice, now more than two feet thick, and a lure of ivory, fashioned into the form of a fish and tied to the end of a string, was dangled up and down in the water. This drew the attention of the trout, and as they came to investigate the lure the boys speared them. The dexterity of the boys with the spear was marvelous. I tried it several times myself, but always failed to spear my fish. A heavy snow storm was raging at the time, with a stiff north-







KAYAK IN SMOOTH WATER

west wind, and at the end of three hours I returned to camp with both cheeks frost-bitten.

The following day I tried my luck again in another pond somewhat farther away, and succeeded in spearing six large trout. I threw my spear at one big fellow that must have weighed fully twelve pounds, but with the fisherman's proverbial luck, this biggest fish of all got away.

On my return to camp that evening I witnessed from a hilltop another most remarkable sunset, in point of variety of sky colorings. These colorings included red, blue, brown, black, white and a peculiar changing green. With the large icebergs towering hundreds of feet above the northern ice pack it was a spectacle never to be forgotten.

The long night was approaching with steady and certain tread. Daily the sun at meridian hung down in the heavens until it barely circled along the north-western horizon. Heavy winds and terrific snow storms swept over us with only brief intermissions, and the snow grew very deep. Even on stormy days, and whenever the conditions at all permitted, I tramped over the hills to the trout lakes, or hunted hares, and often took long walks along the ice foot, where mighty icebergs and shifting floes always interested and fascinated me, as an ever changing panorama. These tramps gave needed exercise to keep me in condition for the harder expeditions to come later.

When I could not get out, and of an evening, I occupied the time studying the natives and building

## 80 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

up my vocabulary. One evening six of the young boys ranging from six to eight years of age came over to camp and sang several of their songs. They were very amusing indeed, and some of the youngsters had good voices and kept excellent time.

Another incident occurred at this time that may be interesting. Dropping into Kulutinguah's igloo I found a feast in progress. The people were eating some kind of meat with great relish. It was very nice, clean looking meat indeed. I was out of fresh meat and this looked good to me. They offered me a piece with their usual hospitality. Observation had taught me caution, and before accepting it I inquired its origin. It was dog meat and, unfortunately, conventional prejudices against eating dog meat compelled me to decline.

During these periods of waiting I never tired of watching the women constructing native skin garments. Their work on skins is marvelously fine. The stitches are so evenly and exactly made that if one had not actually seen them at work he might suppose the stitching to have been done by machinery. The thread used is animal sinew, usually that of the reindeer or narwhal. Kudlar's kooner made me some miniature Eskimo clothes to take home with me.

Early in October the women began to show much uneasiness at the long absence of the hunting party that had gone to Humboldt Glacier. It was expected that the hunters would have returned before this, and fears were entertained for their safety. It seemed to me, however, from the general appearance of the

ice floe, which had rafted and broken up near ice shore, that they would have a difficult time in getting back. The snow on land was so deep, and at the same time so light, I could not see how dogs and komatiks could get through it at all.

Referring to the ice, late in September a pronounced movement had occurred in it. That to the southward, over which we had traveled in our dog journey to the boat, had entirely disappeared, and the sea was open. Great sheets of the floe passed at this time to the southward. Everywhere, in fact, even to the northward, were great leads of open water. On October third, however, the Sound appeared to be more completely covered with ice than at any previous period. On that day, while walking on the hills with two Eskimo boys, I had a very good view of the ice opposite Annootok, and it seemed possible to cross upon it to Cape Sabine, not one spot of open water being visible in that direction.

At midnight on October sixth there occurred a remarkable display of northern lights. Exceedingly brilliant and beautiful they were, with changing colors sweeping the heavens. At the same time a silence that was death-like brooded over the world, broken only at intervals by cannon-like reports of cracking ice far out on Smith Sound, or the mournful howl of a dog. No other animal except a full-blooded wolf can make that particular noise. Breaking upon the silent night, it is heartrending beyond description.

In some way I caught a severe cold, and suffered

much with sore throat, lame back, and aches in every joint and pains in the chest, that I feared I should be seriously ill. Medicines given me by Dr. Goodsall had been lost through breakage of bottles or freezing, on the trip from Etah, and I was practically without remedies, possessing only a few in my medicine case, none of which suited my ailments. This set me thinking of home. I believe for the first time since my arrival I cordially wished myself back in my room in New Haven, with all the comforts that it implied. But it did no good to worry now, and I put the thought behind me. For a day or two I was compelled to remain the greater part of the time in bed. Then I forced myself out of doors to renew my walks, and felt better.

On October ninth all the Eskimos in camp turned out in new winter fur clothes. In these costumes nearly every variety of fur and skins found in the country was represented—fox, bear, musk-ox, deer, seal and hare, with bird-skin shirts next the body. This day apparently marked a period in the course of seasons—the advent of the real winter.

We were on the threshold of the long dismal night at last. Over the world there came a new and fearful stillness that seemed to speak of impending doom—something intangible, indescribable, uncanny. The gloom that settled upon all of us was particularly noticeable amongst the Eskimo women. They were affected not only by the natural depression that impresses itself upon all with the vanishing of day, but an increasing apprehension had sprung up for the

safety of the hunters. A rapid driving of the ice pack to the southward had raised a fear that the men had gone adrift on it—a haunting, ever-present fear when a sudden shifting of the ice occurs while hunters are abroad.

I dropped into Kulutinguah's igloo one evening and amused the kooner by making cigarettes, which she gave her three year old pickaninny. The little one puffed them with a relish which diverted and pleased the mother for a time, but presently Kudlar's kooner came in and the two women began to cry and moan, "*Pea me nodoo isickey! Pea me nodoo isickey!*" [Give me my man! Give me my man!] I felt exceedingly sorry for the poor things, but there was nothing I could do to help them. They were very short of food, and that day had killed three of their dogs to eat. This was an additional cause for worry.

At half-past one that night I was awakened from a sound sleep by a woman shouting at the top of her voice—shrill and startling, like one gone mad. I knew at once what it meant—some one had gone problokto. I tumbled into my clothes and rushed out. Far away on the driving ice of the Sound a lone figure was running and raving. The boatswain and Billy joined me, and as fast as we could struggle through three feet of snow, with drifts often to the waist, we gave pursuit. At length I reached her, and to my astonishment discovered it was Tongwe, Kulutinguah's kooner. She struggled desperately, and it required the combined strength of the three of

## 84 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

us to get her back to the shack, where she was found to be in bad shape—one hand was frozen slightly, and part of one breast. After a half hour of quiet she became rational again, but the attack left her very weak.

In the meantime I went over to her igloo to look after the child. There I found the poor little pickaninny without a stitch of clothes on, crying her eyes out, while five of the wolf dogs, which had broken into the place, were eating everything they could find. After driving out the dogs, and quieting and caring for the child, I went to the nearest igloo, which was Kudlar's, and called his kooner. The other Eskimos were not yet aware of the occurrences, and I had much difficulty in making her understand what had happened; but finally she did, and in a little while every woman in the settlement, with two of the oldest children, were in our shack, filling it with wild confusion, all of them talking and shouting at once.

It was near morning when quiet was again restored and I returned to bed, and eleven o'clock when I arose. I had scarcely finished dressing when outside there arose a loud shouting. I rushed out and found all the women and children gathered in great and joyful excitement, pointing toward the north. Through a light snow that was falling I could make out three long, black objects trailing slowly toward us over the ice. Women, children and myself ran out to meet and welcome the returning hunters.

The hunt had been very successful. All the sledges were heavily loaded. Fourteen deer, six seals



ON SMITH SOUND ICE





and five bears—one of the bears a very large one—had been killed.

They had not forgotten me. Kulutinguah presented me with a bear's skin, which he had removed from the animal with great care, leaving on claws and head; and there were five deer heads for me, though but one of them was of value as the others were in velvet.

Kudlar had injured his hip and it was so painful he could hardly move. Upon examination I found it much inflamed. With my limited supply of remedies, the best I could do was to apply hot poultices of corn-meal, and instruct him to lie still in his igloo. In a few days, under this treatment, he was so far improved as to be about again.

On the evening after the hunters returned, and while I was dressing Kudlar's hip, Tongwe—Kulutinguah's kooner—was again attacked by problokto. She rushed out of the igloo, tore her clothing off and threw herself into a snow-drift. I ran to Kulutinguah's assistance, but the woman was strong as a lion, and we had all we could do to hold her. A strong north wind was blowing, with a temperature eight degrees below zero, and I thought she would surely be severely frozen before we could get her into the igloo again, but in some miraculous manner she escaped even the slightest frost-bite. After getting her in the igloo she grew as weak as a kitten, and it was several hours before she became quite herself. In connection with this woman's case, it is curious and interesting to note that, previous to the attack

## 88 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

which she had suffered the day before the return of the hunting party, she had never shown any symptoms of problokto.

Our fresh meat had been gone for some time, and the supplies of the Eskimos at the settlement were so far exhausted that the people were in a really serious position, when the hunting party arrived. The sledge loads of meat were, therefore, particularly welcome. Whether it was due to this addition to our diet I cannot say, but certainly my physical condition, which had fallen below the normal, at once renewed itself, and in a day or two I felt as fine and fit as ever.

In the short interval between the return of the men and their next hunting expedition, in which I was to take part, Oxpuddyshou carved for me a miniature sledge and dogs out of ivory. The skill displayed in this direction by the Eskimos was wonderful. Later I attempted it myself, and had some success carving dogs, seals and the like, out of walrus teeth; but it had to be done with a jack-knife, and was very tedious work. My ambition in this line started a carving epidemic, and every one, even the young boys, tried a hand at it.

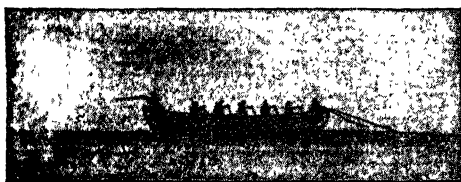
Some of the Eskimos displayed a remarkable artistic instinct. One of them drew for me several excellent representations of animals, and reproduced incidents of the hunt. I had but to suggest an idea for a sketch, supply pencil and paper, and in a few minutes a very well executed drawing would be produced. One man particularly had an excellent eye

for proportion and perspective, and though entirely without previous practice, handled the pencil with skill.

Though snow was deep, I took long daily walks with the Eskimos, or alone. This was my practice from the beginning, for I realized that continuous, systematic, out-of-door exercise, more than all else, was necessary to keep me in health and in condition for proposed hunting expeditions later. After the hunters returned, fishing through the ice in the ponds was resumed with some success; but the weather was now so cold that it was all but impossible to keep the holes open until fish appeared around the lure, and could be speared, and as quickly as our lines were taken out of the water they became as stiff as wire.

Returning on a moonlight night from one of my tramps I recall how plainly I could see Cape Sabine, standing out grim and black against the white-clad shores of Ellesmere Land. The air on that occasion was so rare that Cape Sabine seemed less than ten miles distant.

Another trip to Humboldt Glacier was now planned before the final disappearance of the sun for the long night; and I was to join in it, and receive my first real experience on an Arctic trail over the ice.





## VI

### A BEAR HUNT TO HUMBOLDT GLACIER

**D**URING the early part of October I devoted myself to the preparation of personal equipment for the proposed expedition. A strong box had to be made in which to carry the oil stoves and preserve them from damage on the komatik, should they come in contact with rough ice. I had no bedding warm enough for the open snow fields in the low temperature we were now experiencing, and therefore secured in trade three musk-ox skins from Kulutinguah, which the women fashioned into a sleeping-bag for us. When the sleeping-bag was finished it seemed to me a very warm and adequate protection, but rather heavy for sledge traveling, where weight must be kept down at the sacrifice of comfort. Thus, in ample time, I gathered together my Arctic traveling equipment.

The Eskimos on their part had a general clearing out of incapable dogs, and six were killed that were not good enough haulers, in the estimate of their masters, to pay for the food they ate. A great deal of flesh is consumed by an Eskimo dog, even if it is kept in a half-starved condition, and this is an economy that the Eskimo must look after carefully.

The six animals killed were skinned and their meat cached as a future food supply. The natives claim that for the purpose of variety dog flesh is very good food, and they like it well. I made one attempt to eat it. Some of the meat had been boiled in seal fat, and looked rather tempting. I accepted a piece of it, and made an honest effort to swallow it, but could not force myself to do so. I had not yet approached quite near enough to the primordial. If I had been hungry, with nothing better to eat, it doubtless would have been different, and qualms and prejudices would have been forgotten.

The Eskimo dogs were a source of great interest to me. They would break into seemingly impossible places, and devour every imaginable thing that fell within their reach. A bottle of whiskey that I was reserving in a box, packed in straw, was found two hundred yards from camp by Kudlar's kooner, and returned to me. The dogs had broken into the box and carried the bottle away. It seems hard to believe, but I discovered that they would actually open tin cans to get at the contents.

I do not know of any other animal that could withstand and live through the hardships to which these dogs are subjected. They are beaten, kicked and starved continually. The Eskimos claim they are the better workers for it, and that kindness makes them lazy. Some of the dogs were addicted to chewing their traces, and I saw the Eskimo masters hammer out the back teeth as a preventative. The poor dogs bled so profusely that I thought they would die, but

## 92 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

they came through the ordeal with apparently little injury, save the loss of teeth and lacerated lips. This is only an instance of the extreme cruelty to which dogs are subjected by their native masters.

No matter how great the white visitor's inclination to interfere and stop these cruelties, he is powerless to prevent them. The Eskimos consider such interference an unwarranted intrusion into their personal affairs to be resented. They have always treated dogs in this way, and can see nothing wrong in it. It is entirely a matter of education. They have never been educated to feel compassion for dumb brutes, though they are strongly imbued with sympathy for human kind.

Everything was at length ready for the hunt, and one dark morning near the middle of October the komatiks were loaded. My personal outfit included a sleeping-bag, two changes of boots, three pairs of hareskin stockings, one pair of big bearskin mitts with three pairs of lighter ones to be worn inside, one pair of bearskin pantaloons, one foxskin coat and one deerskin kuletars.

Our party was composed of Kulutinguah, with twelve dogs; Kudlar, with ten dogs; Ilabrado, with fourteen dogs; and the elder Oxpuddyshou, with fourteen dogs. There were two Oxpuddyshous, father and son, and it may be interesting to explain that it is not uncommon for two or three men in the same family to bear the same name, as well as several in the tribe. Oxpuddyshou, one of the oldest men among the Highland Eskimos, was to be my personal com-



WIND-BREAK OF SNOW-BLOCKS





panion on this trip and I was to travel with his sledge. Ilabrado was also a very old man.

The morning was bitterly cold. The dogs left the settlement with a rush, impatient to be away, as is their habit always upon beginning a journey, but heavy soft snow soon brought them down to a slow and tedious gait. Two young dogs in Oxpuddyshou's team presently refused to pull, and the impatient and enraged Eskimo mercilessly beat them to death with the handle of his whip, cut their harness, and left the carcasses on the ice. For a time the remaining twelve worked well, but at length one of them also lagged, and much time was lost in frequent halts, while Oxpuddyshou beat the dog until the unfortunate creature began to bleed at the nose, and it, too, was cut loose and left for dead.

Delays caused by frequent halts to beat the dogs lost us much valuable time, resulting in the other sledges leaving us far in the rear. However, the remaining dogs settled down to good steady hauling, and on reaching smooth ice late in the day a speed of from four to four and a half miles an hour was attained; and when we halted to camp by the side of a large island of ice, twenty-three miles had been covered.

It was dark as pitch and the cold was intense, bitter, penetrating. My sleeping-bag was too small for comfort; my tent, crowded with three occupants, was very cold. All this brought home to me the fact that an unpleasant experience lay before me, comparatively unaccustomed as I still was to winter

## 96 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

traveling in the Arctic. However, I promptly fell asleep and slept so soundly and well that I scarcely realized I had lain down when stirring Eskimos advised me that it was time to be up, and I rose from my sleeping-bag chilled through. My oil stove lighted and the kettle filled with pieces of ice and put over to melt for tea, I went out of the tent and ran up and down for fifteen minutes to get my blood circulating. In all my life I had never beheld such a morning—such a combination of dreary desolation and beauty.

The waning moon was very near to earth. A multitude of stars shone from a deep-blue sky with a brilliancy I had never before witnessed, and so close I fancied I could almost reach them with my hand. Even the horizon seemed but a step away. Frost rime hung suspended in the air like a transparent veil of spun silver, and the white expanse of snow and ice glistened in the starlight like a world of crystal.

Bacon and tea were my breakfast, and then began an unbroken march of fifteen hours to a miserable camp under the cliffs of Cape Russell. North of Cape Russell an open lead of water, varying in width from fifty to one hundred yards, was encountered, and for three miles off shore it was followed before a suitable crossing-place was found, where new ice had bridged it. The ice was very thin and bent under the weight of dogs and komatiks as we hurried over it, but fortunately did not break.

Now rough ice, exceedingly difficult to negotiate,

was encountered, and the drivers made free use of their whips. It is remarkable how expert Eskimos are in handling this weapon. It has a short wooden handle, and a square-flipper seal- or walrus-skin lash twenty to twenty-five feet in length, and the Eskimos, who wield it equally well in either hand, can cut with never failing accuracy the delinquent dog at which they aim.

The ice foot here must be very old. It is two hundred yards wide and fully twenty feet thick. Presently we climbed it and on the upper level found a clear, fine road of smooth and perfect ice. It had been pitch dark for two hours before we reached Cape Scott, where we halted to make camp. Here we found Sipsu's tupek, or tent, and lying around it nine deerskins, two large Polar bearskins, and a great deal of meat piled up and covered with rocks, but no sign of the hunters themselves. Sipsu, Tukshu and Teddylinguah had preceded us, and apparently had found game promptly. As quickly as possible I put up my tent, got my fire going, and in a little while had a generous quantity of Sipsu's deer meat sizzling in the pan for supper.

After a sumptuous meal, I waited for an hour for the return of the hunters, and had just crawled into my sleeping-bag when I heard the crack of dog whips, and presently Tukshu, Teddylinguah and Sipsu arrived, each with a komatik heavily loaded with meat. The three Eskimos had killed eleven deer and two bears. All day they had been hauling the deer meat out of the hills, and were now making

## 98 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

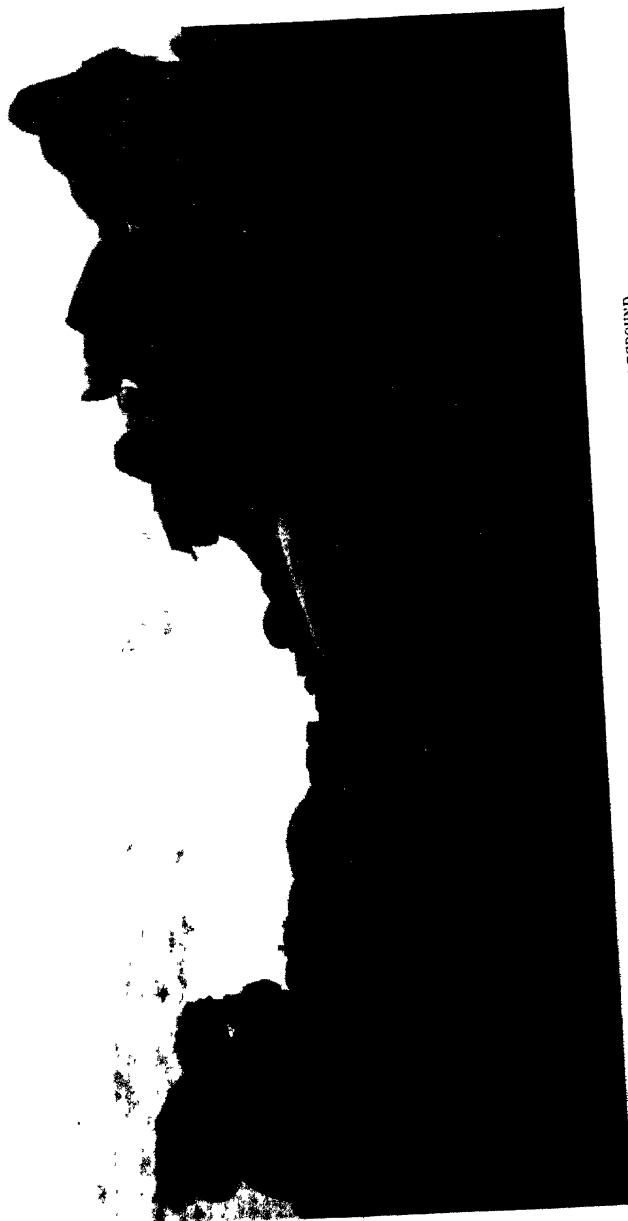
ready to begin their return journey to Etah in the morning twilight.

I settled for sleep, but in a little while a pandemonium of fighting, howling dogs and singing Eskimos struck up, making it evident that a celebration was in progress and that sleep would be out of the question, so I decided to rise, join the hunters and make a night of it.

A spectacle weird and impressive met my view. With bear and seal fat for fuel, the Eskimos had built a large fire. The flame, shooting high in air, spread its light for a long distance, illuminating the surrounding icebergs, the blue-green masses of the nearer ones reflecting the light or casting uncanny shadows, while those in the distance stood out in fantastic silhouette against the darkened sky beyond. The effect was beautiful and indescribable. Around the fire were gathered long-haired, dark-hued, furs-clad natives, feasting on raw meat and singing their native songs, while wolf-like dogs skulked in the background.

I joined the group, hoping the fire might spread a glow of warmth, but in this was disappointed. Here I talked over a plan of action with my own party, and it was decided that Kudlar and one other should go inland and hunt for deer, while I, with the remainder of the Eskimos, continued on the ice to look for bear. An equal division was made of biscuits, sugar and tea, and through Sipsu's generosity a quantity of deer meat was added to our supplies.





CAMP ON THE WAY TO HUMHOLLT GLACIER, MR WHITNEY IN THE FOREGROUND

Long before daylight Sipsu, Teddylinguah, and Tukshu turned southward with heavily loaded sledges, while our party headed northward, the two hunters leaving us at Brooks Island. We, who were after bear, skirted the island, then headed northwest off the front of Humboldt Glacier, picking our way through rough ice between the icebergs.

After a few hours of hard work, bear tracks were sighted. We gave chase, but they soon turned into rafted, broken ice, so rough that further progress in that direction with the sledges was impossible and we were forced to turn back. Presently, on a large pan of smooth ice, we came upon the tracks of a number of bears, but all were so old that the dogs failed to catch a scent, until at dusk we fell again upon a fresh trail. Here the animals took the scent and were off on a dead run. It was highly exciting. Not a sound broke the dead silence save the panting of the dogs and the occasional bump of the sledges over small lumps of ice.

Ilabradou and his dogs, not far behind, was quite invisible through the cloud of steam that arose from the bodies of the heated dogs; I could not make them out, in fact, until they drew close alongside Oxpuddyshou. Every moment now I hoped for a shot at the bear, but disappointment came again. Suddenly the trail, like the other one we had followed, turned into rough ice, and thickening darkness compelled us to relinquish the chase.

Here we camped. The Eskimos fearing they



## 102 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

might be attacked by the bear, as they slept, placed their rifles alongside their sleeping-bags with elaborate preparation for defense.

As for myself, the night's prospect was miserable, my feet and hands were already numb with cold, and my sleeping-bag, at best too small, now frozen hard with moisture from my body, refused to admit me. My tent, completely covered with a crust of frost, was hardly more comfortable than the open.

Under these conditions, I slept but little, and was indeed thankful when morning came, and the Eskimos were astir. My thermometer was gauged to register only to fifty degrees below zero, and there the marker stood. How much colder it was, I cannot say. My nose and cheeks were frozen and my feet so numb, Oxpuddyshou removed my boots and thrust both feet under his birdskin shirt to warm them with the heat of his body.

We had crossed nearly the whole face of Humboldt Glacier, and not far away lay Cape Webster. Dog food was nearly exhausted, the ice beyond was piled in a rough impassable mass, and it was decided to turn back to Annootok.

On our back trail the traveling was hard and slow. The dogs were tired. I walked the greater part of the time in a vain endeavor to keep my feet warm. A light north wind cut through and through, and no amount of physical exertion could overcome its effect.

Near Cape Scott, two white foxes were startled and darted away. A few ravens had been seen, but not another living thing was encountered in the one

hundred and fifty miles traversed in search of bear. The whole world seemed frozen and dead, save only our own struggling selves, as we toiled southward over the white wastes.

Below Cape Scott, Kulutinguah joined us. His hunt had been rewarded with one small bear and one deer, and he was ready to go back. Here another miserable camp was made, followed by another day of suffering. As I walked my nose was again frozen, and presently the tips of the fingers on both hands turned white. Then my feet, painful and aching with the cold, suddenly lost all feeling, and I knew that they, too, had frozen. But there was nothing to do but push on, and endeavor to reach Annotok as quickly as possible.

When we camped at the end of that day's march, the Eskimos pulled off my boots to find the bottoms and heels of both feet frozen, how badly they could not tell. They thrust them under their shirts and rubbed them briskly until the frost was removed. Then I drew on my socks, and they instructed me to pull on my boots without a moment's delay, for had I left them off for even a little while my feet would have swelled to such an extent that I could not have got the boots on again.

The hardest part of winter traveling in the Arctic is the fact that no artificial heat can be had in camp to overcome the intense and continuous cold.

When the march was begun in the morning, my feet were so sore that I could walk but little, and I had to forego, therefore, the exercise of running,

## 104 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

and sit on the komatik wrapped in deerskin. The Eskimos lightened one of the sledges that the dogs might haul me over rough places, but riding under these conditions was anything but a pleasant experience.

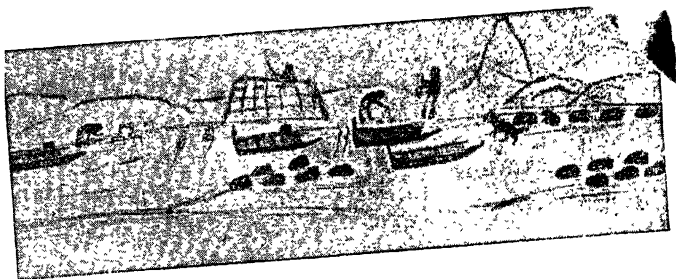
For two days I was unable to make entries in my journal, but it was the same story of intermittent rough and smooth going, miserable camps, and unvarying cold.

Words cannot express my relief when one night after dark we reached Annootok, and the little box shack, warm and cozy, seemed to me the most comfortable place it had ever been my experience to enjoy.

My feet were so badly swollen that one boot could only be removed by cutting it away. Both feet were blistered and some flesh pulled off, but I was thankful to find that the toes were uninjured.

Thus ended my first bear hunt in the Arctic, unsuccessful and disappointing, but certainly eventful.





## VII

### THE GOING OF THE SUN

WE were at the foot of Humboldt Glacier when the sun bade us a final adieu for the long winter night, not to appear again for many months to come. As though to leave with us a pleasant memory of his visit, his going was in an effulgence of glory, and, reluctant to go, he lingered for a little while below the horizon, lighting the sky with a mass of marvelous coloring—red, purple and orange, reaching upward from the white earth beneath into the deep blue of the high heavens. For a time a prolonged twilight remained, but that, too, was presently lost behind the dark curtain that shut from our world all warmth and light.

No words can adequately describe the awful pall of the Arctic night. It is unreal and terrible. Even the moonlight is unnatural, casting upon the snow and ice, the wind-swept rocks and the people themselves, a shade of ghastly, indefinable, greenish-yellow. Shifting shadows flit among moving ice masses like wraiths of departed spirits. A deathlike silence prevails, to be broken only by the startling and unexpected cracking of a glacier with sound of mighty

and thunder clap, or the smashing together of great ice floes with a report like heavy cannon.

In spite of one, depression takes possession of the soul—a hopeless kind of unreasoning depression. Intense and severe as the cold may be, any active man can stand it without serious suffering, when a little experience teaches how, for that acts only upon the physical being, and can be guarded against; but the prolonged, sunless night has a dire effect upon the human mind which only exercise and diversion can counteract.

The day after my return to Annotok was a day of feasting. Nothing ever tasted better than the three good square meals of which I partook. The warm shack and good food represented to me the very height of luxury. The only shadow on my contentment was disappointment at failure to get bear on the trip. It was just hard luck in not running upon one, that was all, for we had gone to the best place in the whole country to find them. I resolved that I should try again upon the first opportunity that offered, if my feet were sufficiently recovered to permit me to do so.

At first I was forced to remain in bed, but it was only a matter of a few days before I could use my feet again. They were exceedingly painful, and my nose and fingers were also quite troublesome for a little while. The Eskimos were exceedingly kind, and most considerate of my comfort. I kept both feet covered with vaseline, until two of the women came over and put seal fat on them, which eased them



ESKIMO WOMEN FISHING THROUGH ICE. NOTE THE BABIES ON THEIR BACKS



greatly. Sipsu presented me with two hind quarters of deer, and Kudlar's kooner made me a pair of fine warm hareskin slippers. Trout, freshly caught from one of the ponds, were presented to me, as well as some ptarmigans; the latter were not plentiful, and therefore something of a luxury.

The day following our return a great feast was held in Kulutinguah's igloo. Every man, woman and child in the settlement except me was there, and I felt very lonesome lying in bed in the shack. But I contributed biscuit, of which Eskimos are very fond, and lent them my kettle, which I filled with tea. The main feature of the feast, I was advised, was an uncooked seal.

Two days of northerly wind started the ice-pack driving southward, and as I lay in bed I could hear, like rumbling thunder, grounding icebergs and the floes jamming and crushing against the land. This thunderous roar served to accentuate and bring more forcefully home to me an appreciation of the desolation of my surroundings.

The Eskimos visited me regularly, creating fun in their good-natured way, and their visits served to ease the tedium of my confinement. When I had been in bed three days Tongwe came in to have a look at my feet and encourage me with the assurance that they were getting along very well. Like an expert in such things she trimmed off with scissors all dead flesh and loose skin.

Early in November I was around again, though with very tender feet. The men were anxious to take



advantage of the little twilight that yet remained to make a hunting trip to Etah. My stock of condensed milk, tea, coffee and other things, was low, and I had planned to make the journey with them to replenish the supply; but when the time came I was not yet far enough recovered to attempt it, and told them to go without me. When the other Eskimos informed Kulutinguah of this he protested at once that he would not go one step until I was well enough to be of the party. As a compromise it was decided that they should delay but three days, and if by that time I was still unable to undertake the journey I would give up all thought of going until the next moon. I would not permit them to tarry longer, for Eskimos must hunt to live, and all periods of light must be taken advantage of. This arrangement satisfied Kulutinguah and my other friends, whose sense of hospitality would not have permitted them to leave me behind so long as they believed I desired to go.

At the end of the three days the Eskimos assured me that the ice was undoubtedly in such condition that I could ride practically the whole way, and they so evidently desired me to go that I decided to accompany them. Sledges were quickly loaded, and snugly wrapped in a musk-ox skin I took my place on one of them, and we were off.

I managed to keep comfortable on the komatik, and the going was fairly good to Littleton Island, save around Cape Inglefield and Cairn Point, at which places the ice was rafted high and the Eskimos had a hard time working through. To add to the

difficulties it was so dark when we reached there that one could scarcely see far enough ahead of the dogs to judge of the ice or select a route. But I was not permitted to ease the komatik of my weight, the Eskimos insisting upon my riding, even when it was all the poor dogs could do to move the sledge, and I should have felt very much better to have walked.

Below Littleton Island open water blocked the way, and we were forced to the land, with a long, steep hill to ascend and descend. It was very difficult climbing, for the wind had swept the ground bare in places, and in others the snow was piled in high drifts. The descent was steep and even more difficult than the ascent. Here we found a hard crust, upon which it was impossible to hold the sledges. The drivers put the dogs behind, and tied a rope around one runner to act as a drag, but even then it was all we could do to keep the komatik from getting away.

Finally we reached the Etah shack in safety, and I was tired enough, when I had started a fire, to roll in a musk-ox skin and sleep soundly until I was aroused by Kulutinguah's entrance several hours later.

My feet were very sore indeed, the wind was blowing a gale from the northwest, and I concluded that I had better remain in camp, for a while at least. But presently Sipsu, Tukshu and Awhella dropped in to see me and urged me to accompany them on a walrus and seal hunt south of Cape Alexander as soon as the wind moderated somewhat. The pros-

## 112 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

pect of fresh adventure and new experiences decided me to accept, particularly as the moonlight now was nearly as bright as day, and with good ice the hunting-grounds were little more than one day's journey distant.

Long before twilight, which still marked our day, appeared in the east, I ate a breakfast of hare's liver and bacon, gave each of my Eskimo companions some tea and biscuit, and with light outfit lashed on sledges we headed south. We had gone but four miles when we found ourselves on moving ice and were forced to the land to escape being carried adrift. This necessitated a very long, hard trip through a valley, with many steep and tortuous hills to climb. Some of the places that we traversed seemed impossible of passage, and the ability of the Eskimos in working dogs and sledges over them was to me a constant source of wonder and admiration.

Thus we traveled for many tedious hours, until finally a halt was made alongside Crystal Palace Glacier, and the Eskimos began at once to build a snow igloo. Blocks were cut from a drift, placed on edge, built up in circular form, with narrowing tiers, until a key block in the top made the whole firm. Completed, the igloo was dome-shaped, and measured within about ten feet in diameter. Its construction occupied about forty-five minutes.

A strong northeast wind was blowing, the snow drifting, and I was half frozen, standing about inactive while the building was in progress. But the igloo proved a very comfortable shelter when I

finally got my oil stove going and deer meat frying for supper.

Here we remained for a day, while Sipsu, Awhella and Oxpuddyshou went out to look for seals, but though they saw some, they were unsuccessful in capturing any. Tukshu, however, after a short hunt brought back two fine foxes and three hares.

Crystal Palace Glacier, under which our igloo stood, is a great mountain of solid ice, reaching far back into the interior. These stupendous ice masses never failed to impress me with a feeling of awe. Hundreds upon hundreds of years in making, I thought of them as living things born in that far distant period before history began, and still existing to look down in silent majesty upon puny man's perishing creations.

In pushing on from Crystal Palace Glacier to the walrus grounds, we followed the northern side of the glacier for two miles before a suitable place was found at which to cross it, then mounted to the summit. The side where the ascent was made was exceedingly steep and slippery, and the dogs could scarcely get a foothold. Three hours' travel, with many circuits to avoid crevasses, carried us across the glacier's top to the surface of the interior ice cap. These crevasses were from a foot to four feet in width and doubtless hundreds of feet in depth. I crawled to the edge of a number of them to peer into the chasms, but could see no bottom.

On the ice cap, where the going was smooth and fine, the dogs traveled at a run, and the drivers urged

the animals to the utmost speed of which they were capable. One poor dog could not keep the pace, and Tukshu halted long enough to beat it to death, cut the traces and leave it on the ice.

Thus well inland we proceeded at an exciting pace for several hours, when a steep but short hill was climbed and from its summit we were treated to a magnificent view of the frozen ocean. As far as vision could reach the ice masses were broken and drifting steadily southward. A full and brilliant moon illuminated the panorama. The frost-encrusted ice glinted and sparkled in the moonlight on every side, and the expanse of wild, frozen country, and the ocean with its masses of moving ice at our feet, formed a spectacle never to be forgotten.

A ten minutes' conference was held among the Eskimos, in which they became greatly excited. Suddenly they called to me to get on a sledge, and I scarcely had time to seat myself securely before they were whipping up the dogs, and we were dashing down the steep grade at tremendous and hair-raising speed. It was, in fact, all I could do to hang on, expecting every moment that a lurch of the sledge would pitch me off; but I managed to keep my place and finally the south edge of the glacier was reached in safety.

Here we turned down to the ocean, where the ice was found to be very rough, and so intersected with deep fissures that I feared to get off the sledge. Three of Sipsu's dogs fell into one of these cracks,



THE AUTHOR PREPARING HIS BREAKFAST ON THE MARCH



and it was with considerable difficulty that they were finally rescued.

Three or four miles off shore the dogs were taken from the sledges, tied to a block of ice to prevent their wandering away, and the Eskimos left me with the sledges while they went on foot in search of seals. Though I wrapped myself in a musk-ox skin, it was very cold waiting, and I was glad indeed when Tukshu and Awhella returned, after killing two seals, and said, "Let's go to igloo."

The igloo was several miles away, and we started for it at once, without waiting for Sipsu and Ox-puddyshou, the other members of our party. We had been traveling for an hour, when two blue foxes started up a hundred yards ahead. The team gave chase and for a little while there was an exciting run, before the Eskimos succeeded in stopping the dogs. I took a long shot at the foxes with my 30-40 rifle, and had the luck to bring one down. What was my surprise, however, upon reaching the dead fox, to find that I had not struck it at all. The bullet had hit the ice under it and a sliver of ice had struck and killed the fox.

We were within two miles of the igloo when Tukshu, upon whose komatik I rode, sighted a seal blowing through a hole in the ice. Quick as a flash, harpoon in hand, he was off the sledge and after the seal, leaving the team to my management. The unruly dogs were headed for the igloo; do what I could, they would not stop for me, and in fact tore



ahead at such a pace that I finally found it necessary to devote my whole attention to sticking to the sledge, until at length we reached rough going on the ice foot, and I turned the sledge upside down, which proved effective in bringing the impatient animals to a stop. When they discovered that I was alone with them they at once grew very ugly. They would have attacked me had I come within reach of their traces.

The igloo was not far away, and I left the dogs and walked to it. My oil stove was on Sipsu's komatik, and with no means of making a fire it was very cold and uncomfortable. When, therefore, in the course of an hour Tukshu and Awhella joined me, announcing that each had killed a seal, and inviting me to go with them to bring the game in, I was glad of the opportunity.

It is necessary that seals killed in the winter be skinned at once before the animal blood cools. Otherwise they will freeze so hard that it would be utterly impossible to remove the skins from the carcasses.

The seals were recovered and we had been in the igloo a considerable time, when Sipsu and Oxpuddyshou joined us. They had also been successful in the hunt, and brought with them two seals, three blue foxes and eight hares. While I started the oil stove and put a kettle of hares to boiling for dinner, the Eskimos feasted on raw seal. The amount of raw seal meat that an Eskimo can eat at a single sitting is simply beyond belief. When they had finished

their meal, the igloo, blood stained and strewn with refuse, was a sight to behold, to say nothing of the stench that filled it. The entrails and other refuse of all the animals, even the blood, were carefully preserved for the dogs. Eskimos permit no waste.

The moon was bright, shining through the twenty-four hours, with an excellent light for hunting; therefore the hunters allowed themselves no rest. Immediately they were through eating and the game already secured was properly cared for, they were away again, with dogs and komatiks, on a hunt for walrus. I was so weary, however, I could scarcely stand, and remained in the igloo for rest and much needed sleep.

Through my close association with the Eskimos, I was beginning to learn a great deal about them and their habits of life. I had held many preconceived and erroneous ideas concerning them now to be revised. My own impression, and I believe it is one generally held, had been that they lived an inactive life during the winter night, and that they were inclined to slothfulness and laziness during the summer. Nothing can be farther from the fact. While it is true that in the summer period life can be sustained with comparatively little exertion, they are constantly waging a fight for existence. During the winter it may be said that they never allow themselves even the amount of rest that civilized people deem requisite to health. One hunting expedition is scarcely ended when active preparations are under way for

## 120 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

another, and when the moonlight is at all sufficient to permit them to be abroad, they never tarry idly in their igloos.

My sleep was long and refreshing. The Eskimos had not yet returned, when I arose, and, after a delicious breakfast of hare's liver, hearts and bacon, I took my .22 automatic rifle and tramped northward around the base of a hill. After killing several hares and missing some shots at foxes because of uncertain light, I found myself many miles from the igloo. The hares were too heavy to carry back and I cached them to be picked up later. Though I was absent several hours on this trip, it was still several hours after my return before I heard the welcome crack of whips and howling of dogs, and saw the sledges coming. Two foxes and another seal had been killed.

I accompanied the hunters, after all had taken a brief rest, in search of walrus. A number were seen, but the conditions were unfavorable, and in the face of a north wind, we finally headed for Etah with heavily laden sledges.

The risks that an Eskimo will run is past belief, and there is little wonder that now and again some never return from sledging journeys. On our southward trip much open water was encountered; now young ice had taken its place. This young ice we traversed for many miles, and much of it was so thin that it bent dangerously beneath the sledges. In crossing it, the dogs were kept on a run, for a moment's inactivity would have meant disaster and per-

haps death. Awhella's sledge, more heavily loaded than the rest, did break through, but fortunately at a moment when it was leaving the flimsy young ice for a solid pan, and the combined effort of all was required to rescue it.

When Etah was at length reached, all of the Eskimos had frozen faces and my own nose and cheeks were frost-bitten. A gale from the northwest, too strong and piercing to face, had arisen and we went into camp for a day before proceeding on to Annootok.

Northward from Etah the traveling was even worse than on the southward journey. One dog was lost in a crevasse. Once we were entangled among icebergs, and in some places so rough was the traveling that I found it impossible to walk upright, and was forced to crawl on hands and knees. But after a long hard journey our quarters were reached.





## VIII

## HOME LIFE IN THE IGLOOS

**T**WO days were devoted to rest and preparation for a bear hunt, which it was planned should be in the vicinity of Cape Russell. Wearied and jaded, I scarcely took time to eat before rolling into my blankets, but after twelve hours of dreamless slumber arose thoroughly refreshed, and ready for a long walk on the ice foot, where I could enjoy to the utmost a magnificent display of northern lights. While the aurora lasted—a brilliant mass of changing color or flashing searchlights—the ice foot and surroundings were well illumined; but quite suddenly it ceased when I was a long way from the shack, and my return walk through intense darkness was one to be remembered. Nothing could be distinguished half a dozen feet away, and for a considerable distance I crawled upon hands and knees to guard against falling into holes and fissures.

When the morning of our start arrived it was fine and clear. The stars sparkled big and bright in the cold blue depths of the heavens, the wind was light, and it was altogether an ideal morning for traveling. A hurried breakfast disposed of, komatiks

were loaded, dogs harnessed, and away we dashed to the northward.

Five miles from Annootok the track of a very large bear, turning in upon the land, was crossed. The dogs took the scent and for several miles we followed it. On land, however, sledging was so bad with a covering of soft snow on the ice, that the animals were soon completely fagged out and the bear's trail had to be abandoned.

A long, hard pull of many hours, with heavy drifts through which we had to help the dogs haul the komatiks, brought us to Cape Leiter. Here under the shadow of a towering bluff a halt was called. I threw up some blocks of snow for a windbreak and in their lee started my oil stoves and put over tea and several pieces of hare to thaw out for all hands, while the Eskimos built a snow igloo for our camp.

While thus busied, we were treated to the most brilliant meteoric display I have ever witnessed. The whole heavens seemed filled with shooting "stars," crossing each other in every direction, many of them leaving long streaks of light behind. It was as though a million rockets of great size and power had been set off at the same moment with other millions following in quick succession.

But inactivity in the intense cold had chilled me through and through, and when supper was eaten I was ready enough to relinquish the beauty of the night and shooting stars for the igloo and my sleeping-bag, in a vain endeavor to get warm. I was so completely chilled in fact, when I did get into my

bag, that sleep was impossible. For hours I lay and longed for the time to come when we should start. To add to the tedium I could not tell when that would be, for I had no watch with me. The Eskimos time themselves entirely by the stars, in the winter night, and I had not yet learned to convert the heavens into a timepiece.

At length there was a stir among my sleeping companions, and with small delay we were up, and plodding northward in the face of a cutting wind. Weary still, after my uncomfortable and sleepless night, I ached in every joint, and it seemed as though my feet and hands, numb with cold, would surely freeze before exercise could renew circulation of stagnate blood.

The dogs had not been fed in three days, and though the poor creatures, weak from starvation, strove to the best of their ability, their progress was slow, and only through excessive beating at the hands of their merciless masters were they kept moving at all. We came again at this time upon a fresh bear track, but the animals were too far exhausted to follow it.

At length I rebelled. There was no use trying to force the dogs to do something they were physically incapable of doing and, as diplomatically as possible, I made it plain to the Eskimos that I desired to turn back to Annootok and abandon the hunt. They talked it over for a long while among themselves, before they very reluctantly acceded to my wishes.

The wind was rising rapidly and, ere the retreat



ANNOOTOK, SHOWING A SNOW IGLOO, AND A DORY RAISED FROM THE GROUND IN WHICH DOG FOOD WAS STORED





was begun, heavy black clouds, pushing in from the westward, obscured the sky and stars and engulfed the world in pitchy darkness. I supposed that the Eskimos would head directly for the igloo, but presently found that our course was landward. Here I discovered that my companions had set several fox-traps, all of which were visited before a long hard walk in the darkness over rough country and rougher ice brought us to Annotok just in time to escape a blizzard, which suddenly broke upon us and for two days swept the country with terrific fury. The cold accompanying the storm was so intense that the day following our return I froze cheeks and nose in passing the short distance between my shack and Kulutinguah's igloo—about three hundred yards.

Referring to the igloos, each of the Eskimos had now, as a further protection against the cold, built a large snow igloo at the entrance to the tunnel leading to his stone igloo, and had covered the stone hut with thick blocks of snow. With this further shutting out of air circulation the offensive odor in the igloos had increased proportionately. This odor was now so terrible that it is beyond the power of pen to describe it. One may however appreciate it to some extent by likening it to a slaughter-house, where refuse is permitted to decay with never an attempt at cleansing or renovation.

Upon entering an igloo one sees spread about the floor indiscriminately great pieces of walrus, seal and bear meat or blubber—hundreds of pounds of it—in various degrees of decomposition. Suspended

from the ceiling are fox, hare, seal and other skins stretched out to dry. On the side of the igloo opposite the entrance is the bed upon which all of the inhabitants of the igloo sleep. It is a platform raised slightly above the floor, and spread thickly with musk-ox, deer, dog and bear skins.

On either side of the platform are native lamps burning seal, walrus or narwhal oil. These lamps are blocks of stone hollowed out to receive the oil. The hollow is cut with one straight and one curved side. Moss or other available material answers for the wick, which is distributed along the straight side. The lamps vary in size from small lamps with the straight side ten inches in length to larger ones where it may be fifteen inches long. If well cared for, the light is fair, and gives out considerable heat, with little smoke; but if not carefully watched it smokes badly, and becomes very offensive.

While Eskimos eat much of their meat raw and relish it so, they prefer it cooked when conditions permit of cooking. It can be understood how difficult it is to cook it, when it is remembered that the only fire they possess is the meager one supplied by the stone lamp. Over this lamp ice and snow must be melted to supply water for the household.

If one happens into an igloo at meal time, the host or hostess will wipe carefully, with the feathered side of a birdskin, a tin can or plate, if the igloo boasts such a dish, and in it serve the visitor with such food as may be prepared. When I called upon Kulutinguah, the day following our return from

Cape Russell, I dined with him. The menu consisted of boiled walrus meat, which was not at all bad, though of a strong fishy flavor.

In a previous chapter something was said of the active life of Eskimos particularly during the winter night. Not only do they take advantage of every moment of moonlight during this period, but they often hunt when it is so dark one can scarcely comprehend how it is possible for them to find or kill game. Even at times when they cannot hunt, through stress of weather, they do not sit idle, but busy themselves in making harpoons or other needed implements, or in carving ivory. When one comes to think of it, a great deal of meat is needed to feed a wife and the two or three youngsters, which nearly every Eskimo has dependent upon him, as well as a big team of dogs. And let it be said for the Eskimos that they are possessed of a full sense of their responsibility in this matter.

The Eskimo has deep affection for his family. He will do and sacrifice more for his children than any people I have ever known, without exception. This kindness extends not alone to his own flesh and blood, but to orphans and other dependents, who are unable to care for themselves. It is so rare for an Eskimo to inflict physical punishment upon a child, that I may say he never resorts to that means of correction; and, I may safely add, it is rarely, if ever, that an Eskimo child deserves punishment, particularly for disobedience. Whether this is due to the fact that the sunny, optimistic temperament of the

## 130 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

parent is transmitted to the child, minus the "nerves," the petulance, and the waywardness born of our conventional civilized life, I cannot say.

Eskimos are optimists. Pessimists have no place in the Arctic, or any far wilderness for that matter, where to-day's dangers and difficulties are real and sufficient unto themselves. Doing his best with to-day, and providing so far as circumstances will permit for the future, the Eskimo gives no other thought to to-morrow than a buoyant reliance that it will take care of itself just as yesterday did. A pessimist who constantly worries about the morrow would positively hypnotize himself to death in these lands in a very short time. Pessimism has been the real cause of many casualties among Arctic explorers.

Kulutinguah was enjoying great success in trapping foxes during this dark period, while he remained at Annootok. I accepted an invitation to accompany him one day on his visitation of his traps. It was bitterly cold, very dark and with the snow drifted badly and not hard enough to hold the komatik, traveling was extremely tiresome and difficult. Two miles from the first traps we left the komatik, and our walk, in thick darkness, was tough indeed. One blue fox rewarded our effort. We reached camp after a cold and weary trip, and then for the first time I realized that it was December first, and my birthday. Of course I had to celebrate; excuses for celebrations come too infrequently in the Arctic to let a birthday pass unnoticed. I searched around my stores, and dug out all the





LOOKING FOR A WAY THROUGH ROUGH ICE

little delicacies I could find for a feast. A bottle was opened, and I drank the health of all my friends and family at home.

It should be said in this connection that the dweller in the Arctic must avoid excessive use of spirituous liquors, if he is to endure the cold and hardships incident to the life. In my experience I found that even one drink of whiskey, when on the trail, would make me logy and drowsy; I tried it once or twice under severe hardships, hoping that it would stimulate me to endure them, but found it only increased the hardship, making endurance doubly hard. For a moment it does stimulate, but almost immediately there is a reaction, leaving one weak and incapable. This applies, no matter how small the dose may be.

In further celebration of my birthday, I opened for the Eskimos a bucket of candy, which Mr. Peary had left with me for such distribution as I saw fit, and gave each one in the settlement some of it. This was a great treat for them, and their pleasure was unbounded. After much difficulty I made them understand that I gave it to them in honor of my birthday, and that I expected nothing from them in return. Yet in a little while after I had distributed the candy and returned to my shack, two women came over from the igloo, and one presented me with a little ivory kayak, or boat, the other with an ivory komatik with six ivory dogs attached to it—a beautiful exemplification of the sentiment that is a part of the Eskimo nature, for the things were given me



as a token of respect and friendship by the people.

The morning after my birthday—though we had no daylight we divided the twenty-four hours into night and day periods—while I was at breakfast an Eskimo woman crying and much excited rushed into the shack and begged me to go with her at once. I put on warm clothes and following her was conducted to Kulutinguah's igloo. Here I found Kulutinguah's boy, a youngster nine years of age whom I had nicknamed "Tommy," apparently suffocating. He could draw his breath only with painful effort, and the people believed he was dying. After listening to his lungs, I decided that the trouble was in his throat, administered a teaspoonful of vaseline, rubbed his throat well with strong liniment—the only available remedies—and had him wrapped in one of my old flannel shirts; he responded at once to this treatment, and his mother, Tongwe, expressed deep appreciation of my efforts. When, several hours later, I returned with the liniment to apply it again, Tommy was much better, and protested vigorously against the liniment. Its strong, pungent odor made the Eskimos sick. This was a smell to which they were unaccustomed and I have no doubt was as offensive to them as the terrible odor of their igloos was to me. A few days of this treatment brought Tommy through his illness, and I won an enviable reputation as a great and wonderful physician. I had already established my position as a skilful surgeon.

One morning I awoke to find the back of the stove



LOADING THE SLEDGES



burned completely through, the fire out, and that my right ear had painfully frozen while I slept. I made several vain endeavors to start the fire again, but the pipe would not draw, the shack filled with smoke, and at length, chilled through, I was driven to wrap myself in blankets and musk-ox skins. Thus I lounged about until, aching in every joint, I started all my oil stoves going. Presently the temperature became comparatively comfortable, and after some temporary repairs on the coal stove, I succeeded in getting a fire in it again, though it burned very unsatisfactorily.

Outside, the Eskimo youngsters were having a fine time on the smooth ice kicking a football made of a blown-up bladder. This is a favorite game with them, and one that they seem never to tire of. For hours at a time they will kick the ball, racing after it and shouting with all their might, with an appreciation of the sport no civilized children could excel. Their games are few and it always did me good to see them play.

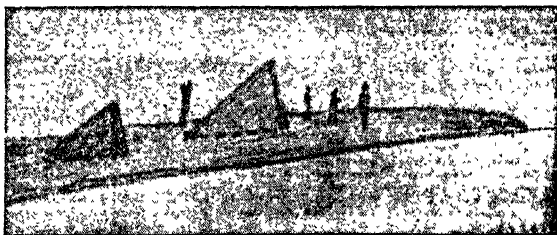
When the stove was repaired and my house in order, I went out to watch the youngsters for a time, in the light of a growing moon, and then proceeded to the igloos, to arrange for men and komatiks to go with me to Etah, to bring up coal and provisions. My supplies at Annootok were getting low, and with a moonlit period approaching, the Eskimos would shortly leave on hunting-trips and none would then be available to assist me. I found some of them already preparing for an expedition to Inglefield

## 138 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

Gulf in search for walrus, but nevertheless arranged for five komatiks for the trip to Etah to leave the following morning.

This was altogether a journey of necessity with me, and I must confess that, with feet still extremely tender from the severe freezing they had endured, I did not look forward to it with pleasure, particularly as traveling was certain to be hard, and there would be small opportunity to ride. Klayo, Oxpuddyshou's kooner, however, provided me with a new and comfortable pair of *kamaks*,<sup>1</sup> which I hoped would make walking easier, while Kudlar's kooner made some changes in my sleeping-bag to add to its comfort.

<sup>1</sup> Skin boots.





## IX

### A NIGHT TRIP TO CAPE RUSSELL

**T**HE moon, past its second quarter, was brilliant; snow and ice encrusted by prismatic frost crystals sparkled and scintillated; a filmy veil of rime hung in the air; wind currents in the higher atmosphere drove heavy cloud patches to the southward. The cold was intense. We hurriedly loaded the sledges to take advantage of the perfect weather for our journey to Etah. Presently the dogs were harnessed, and straining in traces, the komatiks were broken loose and we were away.

As had been anticipated, traveling was rough and hard and for the most part overland; the ice foot was too rough to negotiate and beyond it was much open water strewn with pans driving rapidly to the southward. We had covered scarcely half the distance when the wind began to rise, and were still ten miles from Etah when it attained the proportions of a gale, and snow began to drift so badly that one could scarcely see ten feet ahead.

Once the Eskimos lost the trail, and while they crawled forward on hands and knees to search for old komatik tracks as a guide, left me in charge of dogs and sledges. They were absent not over fifteen

minutes, yet in that brief period dogs and komatik were buried under the drift. It was amusing to watch the dogs roll up into balls, go to sleep and almost immediately disappear beneath the snow, until there was nothing to indicate where they lay save white mounds. Presently the Eskimos returned, cracked their whips and shouted, the snow mounds moved, broke open, and the dogs appeared to resume their weary hauling.

Crossing a wind raked mountain, we descended into a valley which led down to the frozen ocean. Here where rocks had been swept bare of snow for several miles, the sledge shoes, striking against stones, made long streaks of fire, and the dogs had almost more than they could do to haul the sledge. When at length the final turn was made toward Etah, the gale hit us squarely in the face, and it was so strong that at times the animals were brought to a stand, unable to move the komatik against it. As the wind hit one's face, it was like a million fine pointed needles pricking the flesh.

Sixteen weary, toilsome hours were consumed in this journey of forty miles from Annootok to Etah. Within the shack we found a great deal of snow drifted and piled, the stove-pipe blown down, and it seemed every moment as though the building itself would be taken up and carried away by the raging hurricane. When, at length, snow was cleared out, stove-pipe put in place, and a fire started in the stove, I discovered that I had frozen my nose and face again!

The gale that night was little short of terrifying. It howled and moaned and shrieked around the shack and through the rocks and cliffs above, so loud and shrill that it became nerve-racking. For a long while, I lay awake, wearied to the last degree by our hard journey, but still unable to sleep. My imagination at length transformed the moans and shrieks of the wind into groans and cries of human beings in mortal agony, and, driven to distraction, I arose and stuffed cotton in my ears to shut the sound out. Then I fell asleep, only to be aroused later by a suffocating odor of gas. I sprang up to find the stove-pipe down, and the place so filled with coal gas that I could scarcely breathe. I called my three Eskimo companions, and they were all thrown at once into violent paroxysms of coughing. It required our united efforts for an hour to straighten things out again and get the pipe in place.

While we were in the midst of this, two other Eskimos arrived, who had come from Annootok to assist me in transferring supplies. They were very cold, and one of them had a frozen face. When all was snug, I prepared a good hot meal of boiled hare and tea, for the Eskimos and myself, and then sent the five over to their own stone igloos to sleep, while I turned into my bunk in the shack.

After twenty-four hours of its fury the storm apparently blew itself out. Two more Eskimos joined us, making a total of seven men and sledges. We at once took advantage of the lull. On each sledge were loaded one, and in some cases two, bags of coal,



## 142 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

in addition to boxes of provisions, and in bright moonlight and dead calm began our march back to Annootok.

We were not far on our way when the ever restless wind began to rise, attended by drifting snow. Steadily the wind increased and thicker grew the drift. To make matters worse, I stepped into a hole shortly after starting, and so badly sprained a knee that I thought I should have to return to Etah. Oxpuddyshou, however, took two bags of coal off his komatik, cached them, and thus made room for me to ride. With heavily loaded sledges, traveling was proportionately harder than on the outward trip, and so much slower that twenty-two hours elapsed before Annootok and the shack, which had grown to seem like home to me now, finally loomed up in the moonlight.

My knee was badly swollen and exceedingly painful. I rubbed it at once with liniment, while a kettle of water was heating, and then, wetting towels in the hot water, wrapped them around it. Two days of this treatment eliminated the pain and reduced the swelling considerably, though not altogether.

Now I noticed that my hair was coming out in great bunches. This was doubtless due to wearing the kuletat hood so continuously. The skin hood covering the head completely precludes air circulation, and I presume loss of hair was to have been expected, though, so far as I observed, the Eskimos are not affected in this way. With baldness apparently ap-

proaching in long strides I must admit that for a moment I had an unpleasant sensation.

However, troubles of this kind are too insignificant in the great wild Arctic to occupy one's attention for long, and fear of qualifying for the front row in the orchestra was quickly forgotten when Klayo came in to inform me that Oxpuddyshou and Awhella were getting their komatiks ready to leave at once on a bear hunt, and that they wished me to go with them. I requested Klayo to tell them that I would be ready immediately. Then I hastily packed my oil stoves and sleeping-bag, got together some tea, sugar, bacon, a box of biscuits and two frozen hares, enough to last until we killed some game if we had any luck at all, and joined the waiting hunters.

The moon was perfect and the night almost as light as day. The dogs had been well fed for the trip, were in good shape, and for three hours the ice was fine and excellent progress was made. Then soft snow was encountered, the pulling grew hard and a great deal of pushing became necessary on our part, not welcome exercise for my knee, which objected and grew painful again.

At Cape Taney we climbed the ice foot, where we found the going was excellent, and the dogs were pushed ahead at their best. In crossing Marshall Bay two old bear tracks were come upon, one an exceptionally large one, but off the ice foot the snow was so soft it was impossible for the dogs to follow with the sledge, and the tracks were abandoned in the

hope of finding more favorable conditions for following game farther north.

Never was there a brighter moon nor a more transparent, luminous night. All around us mighty icebergs assumed every imaginable shape, with spires and pinnacles towering hundreds of feet above our heads, the blue-green surfaces reflecting the moonlight like great mirrors, or casting mysterious shadows on the white surface of the snow; frost crystals sparkled everywhere like myriads of diamonds; rugged, austere hills rose on our right. All these combined to form a picture the beauty of which is beyond description—a veritable fairy land of lights and colors, of shadows and mystery. How worth seeing it was! How worth all the hardships and toil!

The night, the good traveling, the surroundings, were exhilarating. Every now and again the dogs would break into a dead run, to come suddenly to a halt at a seal hole, or to follow a stray fox, which would dash away at top speed, and looked like a little animated black ball as it scurried over the ice.

I never ceased to marvel at the endurance of the dogs. We had now been three days out of Annootok, and not a morsel had they had to eat since leaving home, for the Eskimos brought nothing for them on the sledges, depending upon killing bear. During these three days we had been going steadily forward, halting only long enough to straighten and unravel the traces when that became necessary, which was once every hour or two. The Eskimos took turns



TYPICAL SCENE IN ESKIMO CAMP ON THE ICE



sleeping on the komatiks as they traveled, and I dozed intermittently, always, however, to be suddenly awakened by the sledge hitting a rough bit of ice or the dogs getting caught between bumps, when their traces would have to be released.

Cape Russell was thus gained without a rest. The dogs were now so tired that the drivers could urge them to no further exertion, and a halt was called. The snow was so soft that blocks could not be cut to build an igloo, so we scraped holes in the snow, in which we spread our sleeping-bags and went to bed, clothes and all, after I had disposed of a large piece of uncooked bacon, a generous portion of uncooked frozen hare, and two cups of tea.

I fell asleep immediately, and did not waken for eight hours. Then the sledges were lashed, and we headed in a northwesterly direction, hoping still to find bears. Presently the snow became so soft that the dogs were unable to haul the sledges, and we had to do a great deal of hard work pulling and pushing. The ice, too, was very rough here.

At length we stopped, and the Eskimos held a council. I could not understand the import of it, but when it was finished they explained to me that it was decided to go no farther, for even should a bear be "jumped" the traveling was so bad it would be a hopeless task to follow it. Besides, a strong south wind had sprung up and a haze partially obscuring the moon, augured unsettled weather. So we faced about. Had it not been for pity of the dogs I should have regretted the retreat, but they, poor brutes, had

been so long without food it would have been altogether too cruel to have pushed them farther with no certainty of killing game to feed them.

Rime filled the air, and frost fell in minute flakes so thickly that in a very few minutes after brushing it off one would be completely covered again. For an hour the northern lights flashed, then died out. Finally the haze obscured the moon completely. From the moment the retreat began we had a rising wind directly in our face, bitter and cutting.

We rode where the going was good, and I was so tired and sleepy that I found myself continually dozing off, to be awakened suddenly by losing my balance on the komatik, but always in time to regain my hold. One halt was made to pick up four traps set by the Eskimos on the way north, and we found two large blue foxes and a white one in them.

The time seemed interminably long, but at last we reached Annootok, and, as on the former trip to Cape Russell, just in time, for almost immediately another of those awful blizzards, so frequent in the long night, broke upon us. It seemed at times as though the shack could not possibly stand against its force.

It was so thick and cold the next day that none of the Eskimos ventured out of his igloo, and I had no callers. Once I made an effort to reach Kulutinguah's igloo, but before I had gone many paces my face was frozen. Such darkness I never experienced before. One could not see a foot ahead. The blizzard, too, was so terrible, driving the snow with such force that it fell like shot striking the face, and made

it quite impossible to keep one's eyes open. It was plain that I could not face the elements even through the short distance to the igloos, and I gave it up.

Even in the shack it was so cold that I was compelled to wrap in skins to keep comfortable, and to add to my unpleasant situation the stove refused to draw and would scarcely keep a fire. Inside everything was encrusted thickly with frost, and the place was like a cold-storage room.

On this day the sun reached his lowest declination south, and would now begin his approach. This was a comfort-giving thought, even though many weeks must yet elapse before his life-giving blessed light would come to dispel the enshrouding gloom, which had left its imprint upon all living things. My complexion had changed to a sickly greenish yellow, almost ghostly. Everything seemed to absorb the tinge, though it was less noticeable in the Eskimos than in me, for their naturally yellowish skin appeared always to hold the color to some extent.

For another day the blizzard raged; then the stars came out again, to peer dimly down through snow still driven and drifting before the continuing gale. When the blizzard ceased, Kulutinguah came over and helped me bank the shack with snow blocks; and when we had finished, the force of the gale was scarcely felt within.

Then I lighted a lantern, and in the pitchy darkness walked three miles and back on the ice foot. It seemed to me that I must get out for exercise in spite of wind and darkness, and it did me good. Heavy



## 150 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

black clouds obscured the sky and the air was thick with rime.

The ground, frozen to a great density and depth, was contracting, and now and again gave out loud cannon-like reports. Returning from my walk I visited the Eskimos, and while I was with Kulutinguah the earth cracked directly under his igloo, loosening some of the rock of which it was built.

It was very difficult in the continuous darkness to keep account of time and separate the twenty-four hours into what would normally be night and day if the sun were with us. This was particularly the case during long stormy or cloudy periods, such as this we were now experiencing, when no stars were visible; and so I later discovered myself reversed—sleeping in the “day” and up at night.

The gale was raging when I awoke one evening to find the fire had gone out while I slept, and the temperature far below zero. After an effort with the poor-drawing stove I succeeded in starting it again, but in the meantime several bottles of lime juice, grape juice and malt extract, which I had been reserving, had frozen solid; the bottles had burst and the liquid was lost. It was practically impossible to keep anything sacred from the penetrating frost that somehow or other would find its way into every nook and corner. The only wonder was that I had been able to keep these things so long.

While cleaning out the debris of broken bottles it suddenly occurred to me that, by my reckoning, this was December twenty-fourth, Christmas eve! The

recollection brought with it an utter sense of loneliness. Fancy drew for me vivid pictures of the scenes at home, of my family and friends, and I longed to be with them as I had never longed before. The sudden recollection, with the picture my imagination drew, made me very homesick. Here I was alone in this Arctic solitude. No man could be farther removed from the Christmas spirit. Oh! how I longed then for friends and home! The dark, ceaseless night, the absolute silence, the hopelessness of getting away from it, palled on me. I believe I had not until that moment fully realized my exile.

But it was quite futile to get lonely or homesick here. There was no retreat from the conditions. So I resolved to make the best of it. I drank the good health of family and friends at New Haven, at New York and at Dungeness, and wished one and all a Merry Christmas. But this was not enough; there must be a celebration, and shortly before midnight I sent a request to the igloos for all the people to join me.

O





## X

### HOW WE CELEBRATED CHRISTMAS

**E**VERY Eskimo in the settlement came, big and little, old and young, and I explained to them that it was Christmas eve, what Christmas signified, why white men observed and celebrated it, and that I proposed we in the Arctic should not let it go unnoticed. Our little community at An-nootok would have just as fine a time as circumstances would permit.

At the stroke of twelve, as my watch told it, on Christmas morning, I presented each family with some canned provisions. This was a gift much prized by them, not only because canned goods appeal to them generally as a very great luxury, but particularly at this time because their food supplies were getting exceedingly low.

As for myself, I opened some delicious jam presented me by Mrs. Carnegie, which I had kept for the occasion, and a box of Huyler's candy, a gift from Mrs. Peary, which I had also preserved for Christmas. Later in the day I tried my hand at making a cake, but it was a flat failure, so soggy and heavy that I was afraid to eat much of it. This, too,

went to the Eskimos, and they appeared to enjoy it exceedingly.

We were to have games, and I rigged up a small piece of ivory with a hole in the center, which was suspended at the end of a string at the middle of the shack. While I busied myself with this the Eskimos made some little spears with shafts two feet long, and points of walrus tusk ivory. The game was to stab the suspended and swinging ivory disk, in the hole in the center, with the tiny spears. It was rollicking fun to watch the eleven men and women trying to excel each other, while all of the children were packed out of the way in one corner like sardines in a box. The contestants entered into the game with heart and soul, laughing and jabbering, and each doing his very best to win.

After the older ones became wearied, the children were given a turn, and to them prizes were offered, consisting of handfuls of candy, small pieces of soap, old socks, or any old thing of small or no value to me, but which would be cherished by the youngsters as worth putting forth their best efforts to gain.

From midnight Christmas eve until half-past one on Christmas afternoon we celebrated in this manner. Then all were sent home, and I went to bed, well satisfied with the day, which was one of real and thorough enjoyment.

Tired as I was, however, I could not sleep. With the quiet that followed the departure of my Eskimo guests, thoughts of home returned, and for a long while I lay awake in the darkness, wondering how my

friends were spending the day, where they were, and what they were doing, and I wished them over and over again, each in turn, a Merry, Merry Christmas.

Eleven hours were spent in bed; then I arose with a bad headache, donned fur clothing and walked for a short distance on the ice foot. The stars were shining, the northern lights were bright, and not a cloud was to be seen. It struck me, as one of the peculiarities of the region, how quickly storms will come and how quickly pass away. Often when least expected, and in an incredibly short time, a clear sky will be obscured, a gale will rise, and a blinding, biting blizzard will be venting its force and fury upon the world; then as quickly snow will cease, wind will subside, and as if by magic the heavens will be swept clear of every cloud.

It was desperately cold, I soon discovered that my nose was frozen, and I repaired to the igloos. Here I learned that while the people were with me celebrating Christmas the dogs broke into Kudlar's and Kulutinguah's igloos and tore up and destroyed everything within reach. They ruined three fine fox skins that were drying, ate all the fat the two Eskimos had for light and heat, dragged outside all the walrus meat they had to eat, and made way with most of it.

In another chapter I said the Eskimos are optimists. They are not only optimists, but philosophers. Life with them is a continuous struggle for existence, yet they enjoy life and are happy. This was a serious loss to Kudlar and Kulutinguah and their fami-





MUSK-OX TROPHIES LASHED ON SLEDGE

lies. A white man would have drawn a long face and borrowed much unnecessary trouble from it. But not so the Eskimos. It was a thing that had happened and could not be undone. No amount of worry could help or remedy it in the least. Then why worry? Worry is harmful, it begets depressed spirits, and the mind in that condition affects the physical system. This is Eskimo philosophy, and the Eskimo, therefore, does not worry, no matter how great the provocation for it. He nurtures optimism. When anything goes wrong, instead of feeling badly he treats it as a joke circumstances have played upon him. So Kudlar and Kulutinguah laughed. The dogs had played a huge joke on them.

I called at all the igloos, and in each the men were engaged in constructing stoves out of tin cracker boxes, and improvising stovepipes out of tin cans that had held baked beans or other provisions. Kudlar's was finished, and he had a fire in it of seal fat, which made a good heat, but smelled exceedingly strong.

When I left the igloos not a breath of wind was stirring, the heavens were never more bright, nor the northern lights more brilliant. It was entrancing and I walked for awhile along the ice foot. The snow crunched beneath my feet with a sound different from any I had ever heard before, and every now and again there would be a loud report and I would feel the ice tremble under me. Sometimes I would stop to listen to the silence—a silence beyond description or imagination, a calm and quiet deader than



death, if such a thing can be—awful, impressive and oppressive. One must experience this to fully comprehend it. No pen can adequately describe it. Overhead the stars shone bigger, brighter and closer to earth than I had ever seen them before, while vast numbers of meteors shot hither and thither through the heavens, leaving behind them long trails of fire. This is the Arctic night—wonderful in its glory, seductive and repellent, elating and depressing, magnificent and awe-inspiring.

New Year's day, like Christmas, brought with it some hours of homesickness. I watched the old year out and the new in, and recalled how pleasantly I had spent the same day, a year before, quail-shooting in the South, and could not help contrasting the present with then, and the vastly different conditions and surroundings in which I now found myself.

At half-past ten I began preparations for my New Year's dinner, and at two o'clock had everything ready to serve—as fine a banquet as one could wish for. There was roast venison with cranberry sauce, canned corn, boiled macaroni, and a splendid rice pudding. This was the first dinner of the kind I had prepared, and it was really a grand success. I invited Billy and the boatswain to join me. We began by drinking a Happy New Year to all our friends and families, and then enjoyed our feast to the utmost.

After dinner I put on warm clothes and took a long walk on the ice foot; but it was so dark I had to carry a lantern. On my way back to camp I called at all the igloos, but found every one sleeping, and

returned to the shack without disturbing them, to spend some lonely hours counting the days until the vessel that I expected to come for me should arrive, which I calculated as still two hundred and thirty-three days away—a very long while it seemed. But it was a comfort to think that when the light and the good old sun returned, with lessening rigors of climate and increased opportunities to be abroad, the time would pass more quickly. I was growing very thin, my fingers were bony and fleshless, my features drawn and yellow, like the old Egyptian mummies that one sees in museums—all the effect of the long night, with its peculiar influence.

Later in the evening Oxpuddyshou and Awhella called to see me, and drove away my loneliness while they taught me how to put the finishing touches on a little ivory dog and seal that I was carving.

Coming into the Arctic as I did with no intention of remaining throughout the winter, I was ill provided not only with many things which would have made my life more comfortable, but necessities as well. I should have brought with me a reliable stove for the shack at Annotok. The one that was there gave no end of trouble. It did not draw well, and it was burned out so far that it was almost past usefulness. The back had fallen out, and was patched with tin from old cans, and now the grate broke down. I had to let the fire die while I improvised a new grate out of pieces of old iron sledge shoes. Under the most favorable circumstances it was difficult to keep the shack reasonably comfortable.

## 160 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

I was also short of heavy underwear, and was forced finally on New Year's day to adopt birdskin shirts such as the Eskimos wear. Thus in the matter of apparel, at least, I had by degrees reverted into the primitive man of the region. All of the clothing worn by me was now of skin, sewn with animal sinew, and made by the women of the igloos. On the whole it was better adapted to the climate and conditions, perhaps, than woolen.

Not only dog food, but man food, was all but exhausted in the settlement, and the day after Christmas two dogs, the property of Outta, one of the Eskimos with Peary on the *Roosevelt*, had been killed. All of the best meat was cut off for human consumption, the balance fed to the teams. But until moonlight returned nothing could be done to relieve the situation. Darkness was too dense to venture upon treacherous ice floes for walrus.

Two days later the first reflection of a new moon came. Awhella took dogs and komatik ten miles south for some walrus meat he had cached, and upon his return reported much open water, with ice drifting rapidly. Northern lights were flashing, not a breath of wind stirring, and the awful stillness was broken by the distant startling thunder of crashing, grinding floes, many miles to the southward, as the current carried them swiftly toward the open ocean.

This is the season when Eskimos do not like to venture far out upon the sea ice, as one can never tell what moment the floes will disrupt and break loose from the main ice. It is the time of year when





A KILLING; AUTHOR, RIFLE IN HAND, STANDS OVER THE CARCASS OF A MUSK-OX HE HAS JUST SHOT

the danger of being carried to sea is an ever present one to the hunter. Now and again Eskimos are cut off from land in this manner, swept to sea on large floes, and never heard from again. The year before my visit Kulutinguah and Outta were thus taken adrift, but fortunately, after three days of intense hardship, their loose pan, buffeted by the wind and driven by the tide and current, struck the main floe and they reached shore in safety.

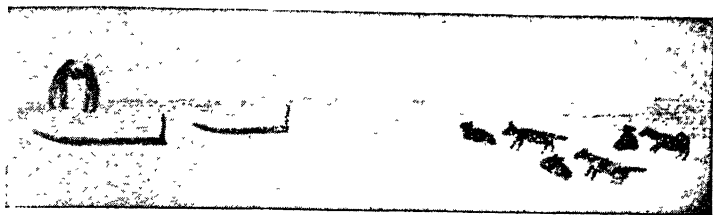
I was preparing for bed one night when Kudlar's kooner rushed in upon me so excited that at first I could not understand what she was talking about. She was so wildly excited, in fact, that I believed at first she had gone problokto. After a few moments, however, she succeeded in telling me that Kudlar had cut his hand, and implored my assistance. I hurried into warm clothes and ran over to his igloo, where I found that the poor fellow, while repairing a sledge and trying to gouge a hole through a piece of hard wood, had run the blade of a large knife clear through his left hand. There was no water ready, and I had to melt some ice, after which I washed the wound thoroughly in a solution of mercury bichloride, and bandaged it. The following day his hand was much swollen, and he could not move the middle finger. He had suffered so much pain during the night that he had not been able to sleep. All I could do for him, however, was to wash the cut with bichloride again, dress it with carbolated vaseline, and bandage it anew. Under this treatment the hand improved and healed in a remarkably short time. In view of

the dirty igloos and manner of living, it is a mystery how blood poisoning is avoided among the Eskimos in cases of this kind, but somehow they escape it; and my patients usually did as well as could have been expected even had they enjoyed the best sanitary conditions of our modern hospitals of civilization.

The scarcity of food was becoming a more serious matter each day. An expedition was planned to go south of Cape Alexander, as soon as the conditions of light and weather were favorable. New harpoons and lances were made, harpoon lines were softened up, and sledges and dog harness repaired.

In the meantime the dogs were getting in a pitiful condition through lack of proper nourishment. Two of Kulutinguah's dogs were found dead one day, and they brought the bodies into the igloo to thaw them out, preparatory to skinning them. I never saw animals so thin in my life as those poor creatures were. There was, in fact, nothing of them but skin and bone. Several others of Kulutinguah's and Kudlar's dogs were so weak and emaciated that it seemed to me they could scarcely survive many days. Finally some of them were taken sick and developed fits. Kudlar was compelled to kill two of his, which appeared to have rabies, running about and snapping at everything within reach. The Eskimos told me this was the result of lack of food.

But the moon was growing, and at length the time came when its light was sufficient for hunting. I was to be of the expedition to Cape Alexander, and to experience one of the most stirring and thrilling adventures of my Arctic sojourn.



## XI

### ADRIFT ON THE ICE

**I**N the period of the Arctic night one can never tell when one may travel. Light and weather conditions can never be depended upon to coincide. Without sufficient light to see the game, generally efforts to hunt walrus are not only futile, but on treacherous ice floes extremely dangerous, and even the reckless Eskimos will hardly venture upon the attempt, unless driven to do so by dire necessity.

The moonlight was still faint when our expedition made ready to leave Annootok, but on that very day a strong north gale arose, so strong that traveling was made impossible while it lasted. Day after day it blew with terrible velocity, and all of us were held prisoners at Annootok. The weather at the same time grew so cold that none dared venture far from shelter. We were short of fresh meat, and I had hoped to kill some hares, but never a lull came, and hunting was out of the question.

The cold was so intense that even the Eskimos kept close within their igloos, and when they did come out of necessity they apparently felt the cold more than at any time during the winter. Kulu-tinguah, while cutting ice to melt for tea, froze both



his cheeks. In the shack, with the stove going, I could not bring the temperature higher than six degrees above zero, and on the floor level it was doubtless much colder. The sleeping-bag was the only comfortable retreat. Once I called at Kulutinguah's igloo, and after sitting a short time my right foot grew very cold and painful. I spoke of it to the Eskimos, and Kudlar's kooner, who was there, had my boot and hareskin stocking off before I knew what she was about, thrust the foot under her kuletär against her bosom, and was rubbing it to bring back the circulation. It had begun to freeze, and had already turned white in several places. Ten minutes' rubbing relieved it. Then she sewed some foxskin under my hareskin stockings, which was a great improvement and made them much warmer. The Eskimo has shorter, chunkier feet than the average white man, his nose does not protrude so far from the face, his hands are thicker and fingers shorter, his body thicker in proportion, and he can therefore withstand intense cold better. Nature has adapted his physical form for the conditions and climate in which he lives.

Day after day the gale continued from the north. Great leads of open water could be seen a mile off shore, with ice driving past to the southward. Daily the moon grew, and the available period for hunting slipped steadily past us, while we remained helpless to act. At last the moon reached its full and began to wane, and the Eskimos announced one day the period of light would now be so short that the expedition to Cape Alexander would have to be postponed

until the next moon. This was not only disappointing to them, it was tragic, in view of their depleted supplies.

Suddenly one day the wind moderated, and it was decided, even with failing light, to make an attempt to reach the walrus grounds. All was activity at once. Outfits were hurriedly packed, komatiks loaded, dogs harnessed, and at two o'clock on the morning of January eleventh our expedition turned southward. The weather was bitter cold. A bright moon lighted the measureless expanse of ice and snow, and the heavens were aflame with the aurora borealis, now flaring across the sky in every direction like a thousand powerful search lights, now melting into a mystical, luminous vapor of changing color, now taking a form that fancy easily imagined a mighty flag waving in a strong breeze.

This display of northern lights surpassed anything I had seen and must have been one of unusual brilliancy and variation to the region, for even the stolid Eskimos exhibited a keen interest and talked long and earnestly about it. To me it was awe-inspiring and grand, typifying that inexplicable mystery that enshrouds the great white Arctic world—something evasive, that one feels and knows exists, but never can quite grasp—a ghostly being that repels but always and inevitably draws one back to the land where it stalks, just as a magnet draws particles of iron.

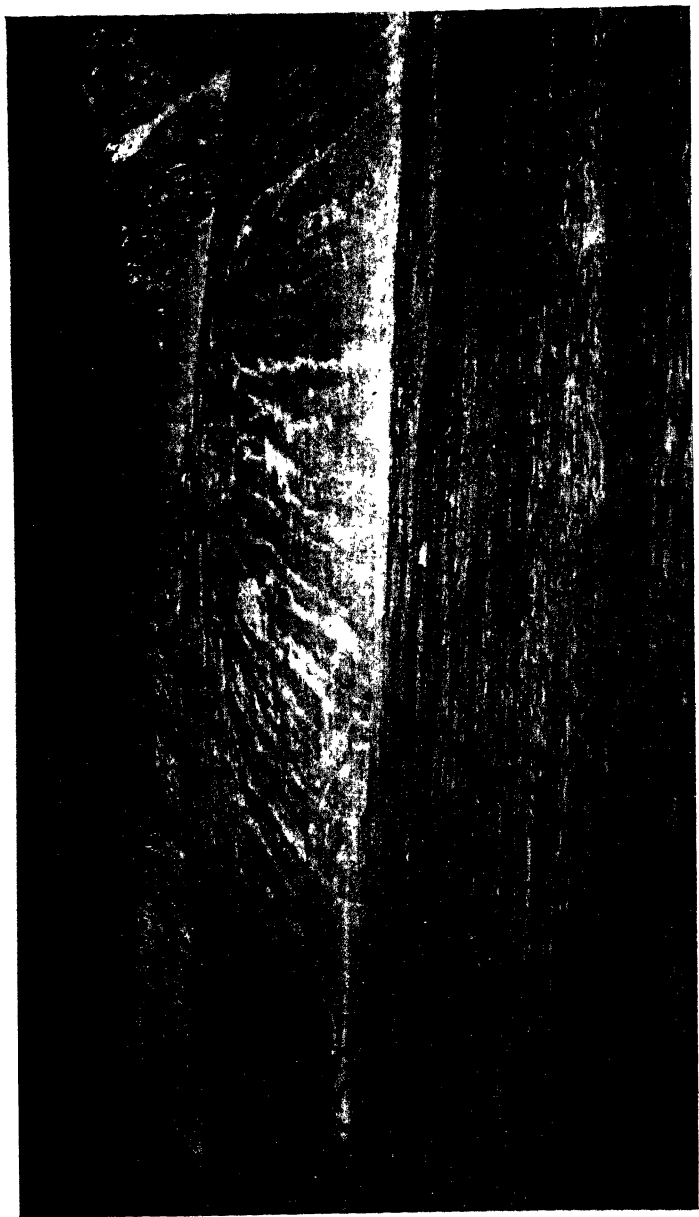
As usual, traveling was very hard. Five miles below Annotok the ice was piled in an insurmount-

able jam, rising to a height of sixty or seventy feet. This turned us back and compelled us to cross the steep mountain lying south of Annootok. Its sides were so smooth and slippery that no firm foothold could be had. At one point we were able to ascend the rise only twelve or fifteen feet when, in spite of everything, we would slide back again. Knives were brought forth, and steps cut in the snow which was as hard and solid as ice. Komatiks were then unlashed, and the loads carried to the top of the steep incline on our backs, to enable the dogs to haul the empty sledges up.

We halted briefly at Littleton Island while the Eskimos opened a cache made the previous summer, and filled two bags with eider duck eggs. These eggs were frozen as hard as rocks, and it puzzled me to know how they were to be eaten. This was soon solved. An Eskimo placed an egg in his mouth, and in a little while it thawed sufficiently for him to remove the shell. This done the icy substance was sucked like candy.

Fourteen and a half hours' journey brought us to the closed shack at Etah, where we were to halt and rest; but to my chagrin I found that the storms had blown the stovepipe down, torn a great rent in the canvas roof, and drifted the place nearly full of snow. I had been looking forward to a warm fire, a hot meal, and a cozy rest. Now it required more than one hour to clean out the snow, and even then we had difficulty in keeping the pipe in position,





CURIOUS ICE FORMATION IN ELLESMERE LAND

against a strong northeast wind, while a kettle of snow was melted for tea, and I was half frozen when at length I crawled into my sleeping-bag for five hours' rest.

It was intensely dark when we left Etah. The stars were like a million icicles hung in a silvery sky. At times meteorites fell in glittering showers. The wind was searching cold and bit to the very marrow. Eight hours carried us close to Cape Alexander, where we found large lakes of open water, and, to our disappointment, conditions unfavorable to walrus hunting. The urgent need of food for man and dog made this a hunt of necessity so far as the Eskimos were concerned, and it was determined to push still farther south until walrus should be found.

The ice barricades were so bad that we were compelled to turn to land. With the greatest difficulty we forced our way up the slippery side of Crystal Palace Glacier, and when at length we reached the smooth plain of the ice cap above, I was dripping from head to foot with perspiration. For miles we sped along at a good pace, when it was decided to try the ice foot again. The snow was hard as ice, steps had to be cut, sledges lowered with lines, and infinite effort expended in the descent, but all to no purpose.

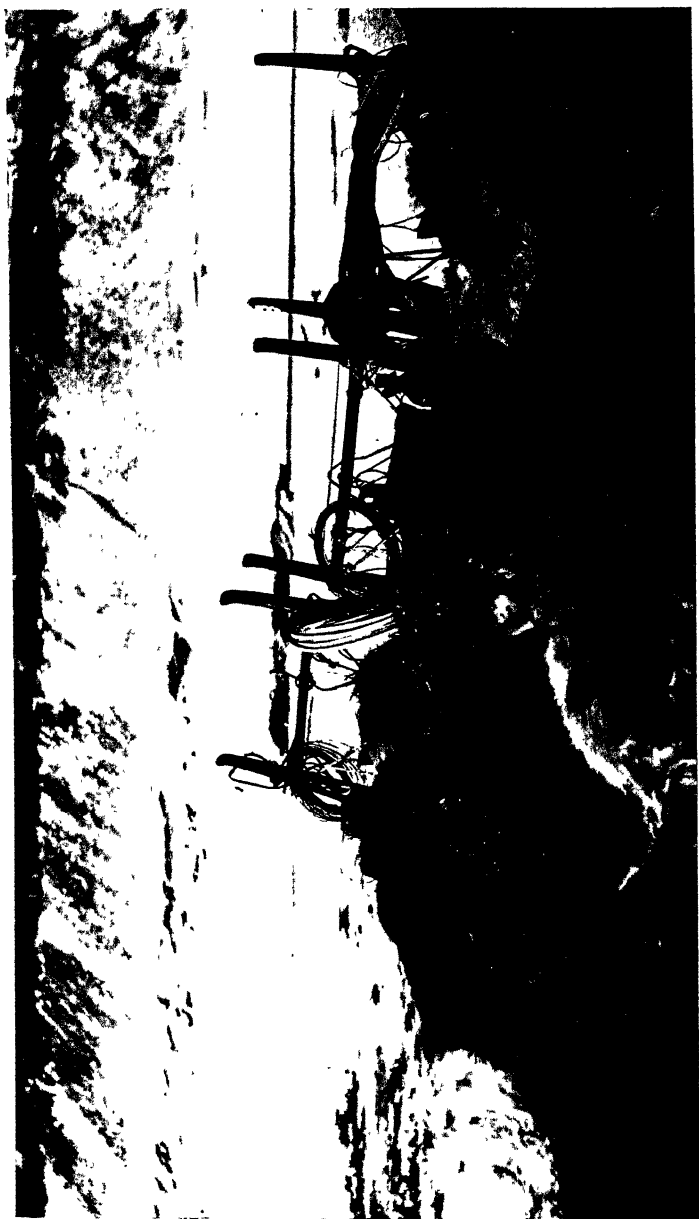
Rafted ice made progress here impossible, and again we were forced back upon the land. Two mountains were climbed in regaining the ice cap, and then for about five miles a gradual slope of smooth

he can live on an exceedingly small amount of food for a long period. His ability in this respect is as remarkable as that of his dogs.

My observation leads me to believe that the Eskimo is undoubtedly of Mongolian origin. His facial characteristics and general appearance bear out this conclusion, I believe, very strongly. I have seen many men and women amongst them who so strongly resembled Chinese or Japanese that if they were similarly attired it would be difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish the one from the other.

And there seems little doubt that all of our Eskimos sprang from the same source. Those who have had opportunity to observe and compare declare that the language of all known Eskimos is the same, with, of course, varying dialects, due to long separation and isolation of the tribes from one another. This is true of them whether they inhabit the North American continent or the more or less remote islands of the farther Arctic. The following words, for example, are found among practically all Eskimos: *igloo*, *tupek*, *kuletar*, *komatik*, and innumerable others. Almost universally they call themselves *Innuvit*, and the foreigner who comes among them a *Kablunak*.

Finally, when I declined to go farther without rest, I was told that very near at hand was an igloo. At length we reached it, only to find it broken down and not habitable. This necessitated a return of nearly a mile on our trail, to a cave, in which a cheerless camp was at length made, after nearly thirty-four



BIVOUACKED IN ELLESMERE LAND





hours of uninterrupted traveling, during which time I had eaten nothing. I was nearly famished. Fortunately, I had some deer's meat in my kit, and a large piece of this, fried over the oil stove, with some hot tea, supplied a luxurious banquet. This disposed of, I spread my sleeping-bag on the ice under the lee of a cliff, turned in with clothes and boots on, and never slept better in my life.

Six hours of rest, and we were again on our way. At the broken igloo the sledges turned to smooth ice, and in the distance water clouds loomed up, giving promise that our hunting ground was near.

Sipsu, in the lead, headed his dogs toward the open water. Oxpuddyshou and I followed, while Teddylinguah and Tukshu were a considerable distance in the rear. Numerous cracks in the old ice, some of them very wide, crossed our path. These were covered with young ice, and before trusting our sledge upon it cautious Sipsu tested its strength with a harpoon staff.

On this smooth, level ice the going was good, and the dogs traveled at a rapid pace. We were permitted to ride, and I took advantage of the opportunity to settle comfortably on the komatik for a nap. I was just dropping into a doze, when suddenly the Eskimos began shouting wildly and excitedly to each other, and I opened my eyes to see them turning the dogs sharply to another direction, whipping and urging them forward at the utmost speed. Something momentous had occurred, but for a long time

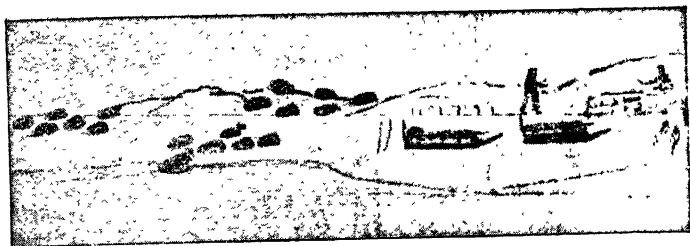
## 178 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

I could make nothing of it. At length, however, in a moment of calm, Oxpuddyshou told me that the ice we were on had *shaddacood*; that is, gone adrift.

The situation was serious. We were in imminent danger of being swept to sea, and should this occur it meant certain, or at least probable, death. Presently we reached the widening lead of green-black water that cut us off from the main body of ice, and mile after mile raced along its edge, looking for a bridged passage. But no means of escape presented itself. With each mile traversed the excitement of the Eskimos increased. The dogs began to tire and lag under the unusual strain. I became very nervous myself as a full realization of our precarious position forced itself upon me.

At length the men grew desperate, as the situation began to look hopeless. They ceased to follow each other and rushed off in different directions, and for several hours, widely separated, dashed hither and thither in vain endeavor to find a means of escape.

This was the condition of affairs when we heard a shout from Sipsu, who was far to the northward. We ran in his direction, and when we reached him found he had discovered a point where the crack which separated our floe from the main ice was not so wide as elsewhere, while several small pans of floating ice between the two larger bodies offered a possible, though uncertain route to safety. It was a desperate chance, but we decided to attempt the passage.



## XII

### HUNTING WALRUS IN THE NIGHT

**T**UKSHU had not responded to Sipsu's call, but we hoped he would join us, and turned at once to our work. Without hesitation, Sipsu tied one end of a harpoon line around his waist, as a life line, and while Oxpuddyshou and I held the other end, the venturesome Eskimo landed safely upon the first pan with a running jump. Thus he passed from pan to pan, finally reaching the main ice with no other mishap than wet feet.

Now it was a question how to induce the dogs to cross. It is difficult to force an Eskimo dog into a place where he will get his feet wet. Among animals he is the greatest coward in this respect I have ever seen. Where one or two dogs go, however, the others will usually follow like a flock of sheep, and the problem therefore was to get some of them started.

Sipsu's dogs would not respond to his call. Their dread of the water was greater than their fear of punishment for disobedience. It became necessary at length to tie three of them securely to one end of a harpoon line, on the other end of which Sipsu hauled, while we on the ice floe pushed the unwilling

## 180 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

animals to a near-by pan of loose ice, and utilizing this pan as a ferry all the dogs and komatiks were at length transferred to the main ice in safety.

Tukshu had not yet arrived with his team when this was accomplished, but we had no time to look for him if we were to escape with our own lives. Farther out on the Sound the ice was driving rapidly to the southward, and smashing with loud and ominous reports. The lead of open water was visibly widening at our crossing point, and every moment was precious. Therefore, reluctant as we were to do so, we were forced to abandon the luckless Tukshu to his fate, and one by one made the passage on the ice raft to the main ice.

The last of us had barely made the landing in safety when we heard Tukshu shout, and a few minutes later he arrived, in a state of great excitement, at the point on the floe we had just abandoned. His coming brought us relief, for perhaps he might even yet be saved, though in imminent danger now of being hopelessly cut adrift. All hands worked rapidly and feverishly. Tukshu's dogs, then his komatik, and finally his belongings, were all successfully transferred, and at length the Eskimo himself was afloat on the ice-pan ferry. But the danger was not yet over when we had him once adrift.

Tukshu, on a block of ice, was scarcely half-way across the open lead, when with a roar like the discharge of artillery, the floe he had just left broke into three parts. An upheaval of water followed, the pan upon which Tukshu was standing broke,

plunging him into the sea, and a wave ran over the main ice.

Tukshu seemed lost, but in some manner he succeeded in reaching the edge of the main ice and was hauled upon it. The other Eskimos began at once to beat the water, quickly forming into ice, out of his bearskin trousers, while he pulled off his wet kuletar and donned a *kopartar*.<sup>1</sup> Then I gave him a small drink of whiskey from my flask, and he began running up and down to warm himself.

I do not know whether it was the whiskey, or the excitement attendant upon his narrow escape, but suddenly Tukshu went problokto, and nearly two hours elapsed before he was sufficiently recovered for us to begin our retreat.

The excitement on the ice floe, the escape, and the peril of Tukshu had made me forget the cold. Now with wet feet, freedom from mental strain, and inactivity, it seemed that I should freeze. Even the exercise of travel was of small avail in overcoming the thorough chilling that I endured.

We headed straight for land, and when the ice foot was reached and mounted, made a brief halt to enable Sipsu and Oxpuddyshou to climb a mountain for a look at the ice ahead. Tukshu took advantage of the delay to roll into deerskins, and was soon asleep. I set up my two oil stoves, after much trouble, put over two kettles of snow to melt for tea, and attempted to thaw out some deer's meat which had frozen as hard as a rock.

<sup>1</sup> A foxskin garment.

The moon had gone, and it was very dark. As I made tea I recall that I drew some comfort from the fact that very soon the good old daylight would come again to cheer our hearts, for already we were favored with nearly three hours of dim twilight.

In a little while the Eskimos returned to report that from the little they could see, there appeared to be good ice to the southward. Some biscuits were washed down with hot tea, and we resumed our march.

Two miles on the rough ice foot, and we descended again to the Sound to find the ice smooth and fine, covered with hard-packed drift. Presently two of Oxpuddyshou's dogs lay down, utterly exhausted. He beat them nearly to death with the handle of his whip, but it was no use. They howled lustily, but would not walk another step. Then the komatiks were unloaded, and to my great joy I learned that an igloo was to be built and we should rest.

I set my watch by guess, for I had lost all record of days and time and everything, and when the igloo was ready crawled into my sleeping-bag for twelve and a half hours of dreamless slumber.

A strong northerly wind was blowing when we arose, and the weather was intensely cold. The Eskimos breakfasted on frozen walrus meat, chipped off with hatchets, while I heated a can of baked beans for myself. This over, the loads were again lashed into place, and just as dawn was breaking we were moving again.

One of Oxpuddyshou's dogs, too weak to stand,



LOOKING FOR SEAL FROM AN ICE HUMMOCK





was left behind. Another, a fine young fellow, was lashed upon Awhella's sledge so tightly that it seemed to me it could scarcely survive. The Eskimos, however, assured me it was all right.

We pushed along at a good pace for ten miles or so, when Sipsu, well in the lead, stopped and began to shout. We were far from land, and with the remembrance of our recent experience still in mind, and fearing that we were again adrift, the other Eskimos immediately became greatly excited.

When we overtook Sipsu, however, our fears were dispelled. He was down on hands and knees carefully scrutinizing the snow, and I discovered that he was examining two sledge tracks headed to the south. Presently he informed me that the tracks must have been made within the past two days, otherwise they would have been covered with snow. Other Eskimos were not far off, and we would follow them.

The dogs' traces were hurriedly untangled, the Eskimos held a few minutes' conversation among themselves, little of which I could understand, and we were away, trailing the komatiks that had gone before, and pointing for Cape Robinson. Rounding the Cape, we turned toward the head of a deep cove, where we soon came upon an Eskimo settlement of three stone, and two snow, igloos, inhabited by ten natives, men, women and children.

My cheeks and nose slightly frozen, my feet numb with the cold, and aching in every limb, I retreated to one of the stone huts while the Eskimos built a snow igloo for our party. The igloo which I en-

tered was the home of Eiseeyou, and unusually clean for an Eskimo igloo, though, like all of them, heavy with the odor of walrus and seal. They made me very welcome, after the fashion of Eskimos, and in turn I made myself quite at home. I removed my kuletar and wrapped myself in warm deerskins, while two of the women took off my boots and briskly rubbed my nearly frozen feet to revive the circulation.

Thawed out and comfortable, I made tea for the party over an Eskimo lamp, in which seal oil was burning, then lay down for a few minutes' rest upon the platform bed, thickly covered with skins, in the back of the igloo. How long I slept I do not know, but when I awoke the light in the stone lamp had nearly burned out, two women and a man were sleeping alongside me, and I was literally covered with a fresh stock of *kumiks*.<sup>1</sup> I arose at once, but could find my boots nowhere, and was obliged to waken Eiseeyou's kooner, Anahway, to get them for me. Donning warm clothing, I left my drowsy hosts, and sought out my traveling companions in the snow igloo they had built.

Here I found my sleeping-bag thoughtfully laid out for me to crawl into, with my oil stoves alongside, ready to be lighted. The Eskimos were sitting around inside the igloo, laughing, talking and eating frozen walrus meat which they chopped with an ax, in generous portions, from a large piece in the center of the circle. Not one of my friends had gone to

<sup>1</sup> Body lice.

bed since our arrival at the settlement. I lighted the stoves, made tea, and passed each a cup of it with a biscuit.

While we were thus engaged, the Eskimos laughing as they talked and ate, and enjoying themselves to the utmost, Tukshu, without warning or hint, went problokto. He fought the others like a demon, and I thought he would surely break through the side of the igloo, but finally, though the Eskimos did their utmost to keep him in, he passed out through the entrance. In the tussle nearly all his clothing was torn off, and in the bitter and intense cold it seemed to me he must certainly freeze. For an hour he wandered around in the snow, while the others watched him through holes they had cut in the igloo's side. Then he was captured and taken into one of the stone habitations.

After quiet was restored I lay down, but it was a long while before I could get asleep, though when I finally did so I slept soundly for fourteen hours. When I awoke the igloo was in darkness, and all of the Eskimos snoring loudly. I had caught cold, my throat was sore, and I ached in every limb and joint. I roused the others, a consultation was held, and it was decided to continue our search for walrus offshore, where our hosts of the settlement advised us we should find game a-plenty.

This program was followed. A few miles over the ice brought us to a lake of open water covered with small pieces of ice, and we were rewarded by seeing walrus rising to the surface now and again to blow.

There was no opportunity, however, for me to use my rifle. In fact, the Eskimos cautioned me not to fire, stating that the report would frighten the walrus away. Therefore I had to content myself with watching the others pursue the game in their own way, which was quite thrilling enough to recompense me for all the danger and hardship of the journey from Annootok.

With the harpoon as a weapon, the hunters left the solid ice to spring lightly from one small piece to another until a pan large enough to hold them was reached, far out in the open lake. The pieces over which the passage was made were often so small that they would have sunk under a man's weight had he faltered or hesitated upon them for a moment. It seemed to me that the Eskimos were absolutely reckless in this passage over the broken pieces, and took no account of the manner in which they should return. Certainly only a fearless man with a clear eye and nerves of iron could accomplish it.

A large safe pan once attained, well in the midst of the blowing walrus, a stand was taken near its edge where, with harpoon poised, the hunter waited until a walrus came within striking distance. Then like lightning the weapon was sunk deep into the animal's body, and quick as a flash a harpoon shaft, provided with a heavy point of iron, was driven firmly into the ice, and several turns of the line taken around it and held taut by the Eskimos. This strong line held the walrus in spite of its struggles to free itself, and not an inch was surrendered to it by the Eskimos. As



HARE ON THE RUN — PROBABLY THE FIRST PHOTOGRAPH OF ARCTIC HARE EVER PUBLISHED



the walrus gradually tired, the line was tightened little by little, until finally the great animal was well alongside the pan, when it was quickly dispatched with a lance.

In this manner Awhella secured a large bull. More than an hour elapsed between the harpooning and the death. When it was finally killed, slits were cut back of the victim's neck through which lines were passed, a double pulley was improvised and in a few minutes Awhella, with the aid of two others, had the carcass on the ice. Every portion of the walrus was utilized, save only the blood lost in killing it, and in an incredibly short time it was skinned, and the flesh cut in large pieces, lashed upon the komatiks and we were on our way back to camp.

The sledges, now heavily laden, were worked through the rough ice with difficulty. A strong northeast wind sprang up, accompanied by flurries of snow, and very cold and tired we were when the igloos were reached.

Sipsu, who had remained behind to reconnoiter, returned several hours later to report a large number of walrus in sight, but so much driving ice that it was useless to attempt to hunt them.

The snow igloo was excessively cold, and feeling far from well I had my oil stoves and other personal belongings removed to Eiseeyou's stone igloo, where a warm and hearty welcome awaited me. They were so hospitable, in fact, that they made me feel that I was honoring and complimenting them by coming with them and making their igloo my home during



## 192 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

my stay. When they are treated properly, Eskimos are the most hospitable people in the world. Certainly no civilized people could have surpassed these Northern barbarians in the quality of their reception, and their manner of impressing their welcome upon me.

When I awoke after a long restful sleep, Oxpud-dyshou was in the igloo waiting to tell me that in view of the bad condition of the ice here, they had decided to push farther south in further search for walrus, and to invite me to accompany them. I was so ill, however, with a severe cold that had developed, that I felt it would be unwise to take part in what would certainly prove a journey of extreme hardships and suffering, and therefore decided to remain where I was. Oxpuddyshou, Sipsu, Awhella, Tuk-shu and Meatok, who were to take part in the southern hunt, were ready to go. I let them have one of my oil stoves, gave them some tea, sugar, and two dozen biscuits, and they left us. This left me very short of rations indeed, for I had not anticipated so long an absence from Etah, and had not provided for it.

The hunting party had been gone but a short time when two Eskimos of the settlement, who had been walrus hunting, came in, both in a half perishing condition. They had barely escaped drowning, and one poor fellow had badly frozen both wrists, and both legs just below the knees where boots and bear-skin trousers meet. They reported the ice in very poor condition, and growing worse. In view of this

it was believed that Oxpuddyshou and his party would be absent for a considerable period. I therefore decided, as I was anxious to return to Annootok, not to await them, but to turn back at once, and in exchange for tea, coffee and sugar, engaged Teddylinguah, one of the young men, and the owner of an exceptionally fine team of dogs, to accompany me.





### XIII

#### BACK OVER THE GLACIERS

**T**EDDYLINGUAH and I had everything ready for the start northward, when suddenly Inute, a young man of about Teddylinguah's age, Eiseeyou and his kooner, Anahway, Oxpuddinguah and his kooner, Ishyatah, with their two children, decided that they would join us. Very hurriedly their komatiks were loaded and their dogs harnessed while we waited. Oxpuddinguah's and Ishyatah's younger child, a baby, was carried in a hood on the mother's back, while the other youngster, a little girl three years of age, was lashed securely upon the sledge like a piece of baggage.

When our komatiks were finally broken loose the moonlight was very dim, but an exceedingly bright aurora illumined sky and ice-bound sea and land, and in the southeast was a mere suggestion of *karman*.<sup>1</sup>

The dogs were well fed and in fine shape. Teddylinguah had eleven big black fellows, fast and keen for work, Eiseeyou and Oxpuddinguah each had ten, and Inute seven. The ice was fine and we sped northward at a rapid pace until the foot of Clements Markham Glacier was reached, the south side of the

<sup>1</sup> Eskimo word for light—this was the coming dawn of the long day.

steep incline of which was to be descended. It was as smooth and slippery as glass, and at several points the dogs could get no footing, and had to be taken out, while the loaded komatiks, with harpoon lines attached, were hauled up the grades by hand. One of these places was so slippery and steep that neither Ishyatah nor myself could make the ascent until steps were cut in the ice.

This is the highest glacier between Etah and North Star Bay, and the most difficult climb I had yet experienced. When the top of the abrupt rises had been attained I was all but exhausted, and so thirsty that I could scarcely speak. Upon making this known to my companions a brief halt was made, the sledges were turned upon edge to form a windbreak, oil stoves lighted, and kettles of snow melted for drinking water. I do not remember that I have ever tasted anything quite so good and refreshing as that water. It quenched my thirst, rested me and imbued me with fresh ambition. Unmelted snow rather increases than diminishes thirst, and it is not safe to eat it. Travel for long periods without a halt through the frozen Arctic wilds is not unlike travel over the desert. When one is subjected to hard physical exercise, which is generally the case, suffering from thirst is unavoidable, with very frequently no opportunity to melt snow or ice, the only means of quenching it.

Here we came upon some fresh komatik tracks running to the southward, and Eiseeyou and his kooner, after a consultation, left us, to follow them,

as they believed them to be the sledges of Murphy, the boatswain, and his Eskimos, on a trading expedition to Inglefield Gulf, and Eiseeyou had fox skins to barter.

Now our trail was up a gradual incline for several miles. Traveling was exceedingly dangerous here, with innumerable cracks and crevasses, most of them so deep that one could not see the bottom of them, and to fall into one would result in certain death. On crawling upon hands and knees to the edge of several of them to peer into the dark depths I was seized with a momentary panic. Many of the crevasses were undermined, with an upper shell that would doubtless have broken had we ventured upon it. The danger of this to inexperienced men is an ever present one. Eskimos, however, appear to know at a glance which are the solid and which the undermined walls, and my companions endeavored to point out to me the difference; but I was never able to judge between them with certainty, for usually they have on the surface no apparent distinguishing mark of which the novice can positively be certain. One of the largest of these crevasses was so wide that we were forced to follow it for upwards of a mile before a safe crossing could be made.

At length the summit of the glacier was reached, and from this point it branched off into three wide valleys, each reaching northward to the sea as a separate glacier, and each with a steep down grade. Here I was to experience one of the most thrilling incidents of my sledge traveling in the Arctic, and an

adventure that escaped ending in a tragedy only by the barest margin.

The side of the glacier sloping down was as smooth as polished metal, naturally very slippery, and with a steep descent toward the sea. At the top of this the Eskimos lined up their teams and komatiks for a race, and at nearly the same moment started forward with dogs at a mad run. I never knew until then how fast dogs could travel. Down the steep grade, with constantly increasing momentum, our komatiks shot, until we were traveling so fast that it was all I could do to hold my place when small humps or irregularities were struck and the sledge swerved. It was the fastest ride I ever had in my life, except possibly in an automobile. Thus we were dropping down the steep decline, the dogs barely able to keep clear of the coasting komatiks, Teddylinguah and myself ahead, Oxpuddinguah directly behind, and Inute on one side, when our sledge struck some obstruction, turned over, and I was knocked senseless.

It will always be a mystery to me how Oxpuddinguah swerved his sledge out of the track and avoided running me down. But he did turn it aside, and in doing so, at the risk of killing himself and family, turned it over to save me. It was certainly an exhibition of quick thinking, quick acting, wonderful nerve and high heroism. On looking the ground over later I found that his komatik runner had shaved my head by less than an inch. Had it hit me it would certainly have smashed my head or cut me in two.

When I regained by senses my head was aching

## 198 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

severely, and on the back of it was a big, bleeding lump. The little piccaninny, lashed to Oxpuddin-guah's komatik, was crying with a bruised left arm. His kooner had a cut cheek.

Elsewhere it was said that Eskimos laugh at a misfortune as a joke circumstance has played upon them. This trait continually impressed itself upon me as one of their most remarkable characteristics, and I never ceased to wonder at it. So it was on this occasion. They laughed heartily over the accident, and the narrow escape from death impressed them not at all. In a little while the youngster was cared for and soothed, the komatiks righted and loads adjusted, and as though nothing unusual had happened we were off again at the same mad, reckless pace, with the grade growing constantly steeper and more dangerous. There is but one way to reduce the speed on these steep grades—put drags upon the komatik runners, and walk ahead of the dogs, snapping the long whip constantly in their faces to cower them and keep them back. This the Eskimos had no mind to do. They were as speed-mad as the most reckless automobile driver ever was, and that six-mile run from the top of the grade to the frozen ocean was the most exciting I have ever experienced or ever again expect to experience. The last half mile down the south slope of Crystal Palace Glacier was particularly steep, and the ice like plate glass, with here and there small lumps raised upon it. Sometimes the sledge would be sliding sidewise, strike a lump and turn almost entirely around, jerking the dogs nearly







MUSK-OX WEDGED BETWEEN ROCKS IN HIS DEATH PLUNGE DOWN MOUNTAIN SIDE  
THE AUTHOR, WITH RIFLE IN HAND

off their feet, as the traces tightened, but never slackening its pace. I wore the bottoms nearly off my kamiks by holding my feet on the ice as we sped forward, in an endeavor to retard the sledge and prevent it running the dogs down, which constantly seemed unavoidable and imminent.

Teddylinguah and I reached the frozen ocean at the foot of the incline considerably in advance of the others, and here halted to rest the dogs, which were panting and heated with the hard run, and to straighten and unravel tangled traces. This gave me opportunity to watch the others descend. It was a wonderful exhibition of skill on the part of the drivers. I could not understand how they prevented the sledges from turning over. It made my hair fairly stand on end and my heart come into my throat! Down the steep incline they dashed, komatiks swinging from side to side, dogs galloping at utmost speed, until all finally joined us in safety and without further mishap.

Suddenly the whole scene and our surroundings had been transformed as if by magic. Ahead of us in the blue depths of the heavens stood the beautiful moon. Behind us and overhead flashed with exceeding brilliancy and constantly changing color, the aurora, so close it seemed that one might reach out and thrust one's hands into the lights. Above us, stretching away for many miles, rose the rugged, perpendicular ice wall of Crystal Palace Glacier, a mass of marvelous green, blue and purple coloring—a gigantic prism scintillating the rays of moon

## 202 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

and aurora in a manner quite beyond description. Below all, and reaching to the eastward as far as eye could see, lay white and glistening the tumbled ice of the frozen sea. It was a scene of rare beauty that can be witnessed nowhere in the world save in the Arctic, and seldom even there. Nature had combined ice, sky, moon, aurora and all the elements in an unusual manner and in just the right proportions of coloring upon this occasion, to paint the picture to perfection. It was a scene that I shall always carry with me and remember as one of the most wonderful I have ever beheld.

The ice was in good condition and fair progress was made, though the dogs showed signs of weariness. As we rounded Cape Kenrick, however, five miles south of Etah, we were met by a strong north wind, cold and piercing. Oxpuddingwah halted to arrange a deerskin on his sledge, as a windbreak to protect Ishyatah and the piccaninnies. I suffered greatly, freezing face and nose badly.

Teddylinguah and I were well in the lead, and reached the shack considerably in advance of the others. My fingers were so cold I could not work the key in the lock, so pulled the staple, started a fire at once, and in a little while we were quite comfortable and warm, with supper of dried eggs, canned corn, a big pot of corn-meal mush and tea cooking for all hands.

The wind rose rapidly, and soon a gale was sweeping the country. It would have been difficult for the Eskimos, for the snow was not in good condition,

to build a snow igloo, and I invited them all to remain in the shack with me. Their delight at the prospect, due largely to the compliment paid them of desiring their company, was unbounded.

Presently the gale assumed terrific proportions, and penetrated the shack to such an extent the stove proved of small avail to keep us warm. At length the stovepipe blew down, and continued to blow down as quickly as it was replaced, and in spite of all we could do to keep it in position, until finally it was found necessary to let the fire go out that we might not be smothered by gas. Upon consulting my thermometer I found the temperature twenty-eight degrees below zero, and crawled into my sleeping-bag to keep warm.

It was very amusing to watch the Eskimos prepare for bed. They stripped naked, then wrapped themselves in deerskins, and rolled up in a bunch as close together as they could get. It makes no difference to them how crowded a place is nor how many there are of them, there is always room enough and for one more.

The women were quite beyond my understanding. For weeks at a time they would remain inactive within the igloos, taking no physical exercise whatever, and then start out upon a two or three hundred mile journey or more, often with a good-sized piccaninny upon their backs, running up hill and down after the komatik, and never showing signs of weariness. When the piccaninny is hungry, no matter how cold the weather, they sit down on the ice

or edge of the sledge, bare their breasts, and feed the youngsters. And very frequently, too, the little one, when taken from the bag on the mother's back, is scarcely clothed at all. I never could understand how they did this without freezing, but whenever I asked the women, as I often did, if they were not cold, they invariably answered "No."

We remained in bed for many hours, until the wind abated somewhat. Then Oxpudlinguah arose and started a fire in the stove, and presently, as the camp warmed, I came out of my sleeping-bag. Teddylinguah brought in a large piece of walrus meat, frozen as hard as a rock, and off this the Eskimos chopped liberal slices, upon which they breakfasted, while I made tea and cooked something for myself.

Thus we passed the time, sleeping and eating, waiting for two days, when at last the wind shifted to the south. We made ready at once to resume our journey to Annootok. A light snow was falling when we pulled out of Etah, and the thermometer registered twenty degrees below zero. By the time we had rounded Cape Olhsen the snow was falling heavily and the wind rising rapidly.

At Littleton Island, which is about eight miles from Etah, the drivers left the ice foot and headed in a northwesterly direction off-shore. This appeared to me a peculiar movement. In all my journeys up and down the coast between Etah and Annootok during the winter we had never taken this route, and the men with whom I had traveled were

thoroughly familiar with the conditions in this region, and the most feasible route. The outer ice here is always in danger of disruption, and one traveling upon it of being carried adrift. I was therefore more than a little concerned, and called the attention of the men to the fact that not once during the winter had the Eskimos of Annootok and Etah taken the route we were now following, always keeping close in-shore. They reasoned, however, that the outside route was perfectly safe, and by taking it believed we could circumvent the rafted ice nearer shore, and therefore more rapid progress could be made.

For two hours we headed off-shore. Constantly the wind increased in velocity, and more thickly fell the snow. Presently we became entangled in ice so heavily rafted that the only possible means of pushing forward was to chop open a trail. It was finally decided that this was not feasible, and accordingly we turned back on our trail and toward land.

The moment we changed our course we came face to face with the storm in all its wild fury, and then I realized that it was the worst to which I had yet been exposed in all my Arctic experience. I urged that we return to Etah until it abated, but that the Eskimos assured me was impossible, as it would bring us head on to the gale, which was so terrific that neither men nor dogs could stand against it. The snow was so heavy and the drift so thick that we could not see the dogs that hauled the sledges. The poor animals, too, had become so wearied they could

scarcely move, and were kept going only by constant shouting and whipping by the drivers.

How long a time we were beating our way toward land before we reached it I could not estimate. The time seemed interminable, and at times the effort hopeless. The ice was piled in mighty heaps. The toil was awful. But finally we reached land in the midst of pitchy darkness, and drift and falling snow so thick it seemed that all effort at self-preservation must cease and one must perish.

Once on land we groped about like blind men in the dense blackness for a suitable drift in which to build a snow igloo as shelter, our only source of protection from cold and storm. Fortunately a compact drift was stumbled upon, and in blinding snow and impenetrable darkness the Eskimos began at once the building of an igloo while the kooner, the piccaninnies and myself, wrapped in deerskins, huddled and shivered on a sledge. In the darkness, the gale and the thick driving snow it seemed an impossible task, and how it was accomplished I do not know, but in an hour the igloo was finished and ready for us.

Skins were taken inside, snow beaten out of them, and they were spread as a floor-covering. Then our other things were taken in, and arranged around the sides. A stone lamp was set up, but the seal blubber, frozen hard, had to be thawed before it could be burned. This was done by the Eskimos chewing, and spitting it, when softened, into the lamp. Presently by this means and after some trouble, a fairly

good blaze was made, and in a little while the igloo was warmed up and became very comfortable. In contrast to the storm without it appealed to me as snug and cozy as any house could be; under the circumstances luxurious, in fact.

I had brought no food with me, and now, hunger asserting itself, I joined the Eskimos in a meal of walrus and seal, varied by some good-sized pieces of fat from the back of a deer. Then I crawled into my sleeping-bag, clothes and all, to dream that I was in Florida, snipe shooting.

How long I slept I do not know. Teddylinguah roused me to say that the light was good, and they believed they would start, though a gale was still blowing from the south. I sprang up, took a good drink of water, helped the men load the komatiks, and in a very good light we were shortly on our way again.

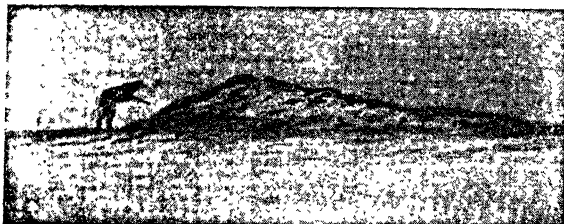
Now that we could see, I discovered that we were still less than six miles from Littleton Island, though in our off-shore course and return we must have traveled more than twice that distance, for we had gone far from land. Now we stuck to the ice foot, where very good progress was made, until half the distance to Annootok was covered, when we were forced to land, in an up and down hill course, with soft snow to flounder through, often sinking to our waists in drifts. It was a long while, however, before we reached the old familiar trail to which I was accustomed, and many times it occurred to me the Eskimos had gone astray, for though it was now



## 208 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

clear overhead, a high wind drove the snow in blinding clouds.

Before we reached the high mountain south of Annootok, which I had learned to know so well, the journey had stamped itself upon my memory as the longest, coldest and hardest I had yet experienced. From the top of the mountain we looked down upon Annootok, little more than a half mile distant, and very snug and attractive the little settlement seemed. The slope of this mountain is very steep, and sledges must be lowered at various points with harpoon lines. I could be of small assistance in this, as there were men enough to handle them, and therefore, with Ishyatah, pushed on ahead. The mountain side was exceedingly slippery, and both of us had several falls on steep inclines, before we reached the village, where every one was sleeping. The dogs set up a concerted howl, however, at our appearance, and very quickly we were surrounded by men, women and children, clamoring to welcome us.





## XIV

### PREPARING FOR THE ARCTIC DAY

ONE who has passed through similar experiences can understand and appreciate the sensation of comfort and luxury that I felt upon returning again to my good, snug, clean camp at Annootok. One's life is made up of contrasts, and by contrast alone do we measure our enjoyments and our pleasures. A life of indolent luxury and leisure can have no great contrasts and is therefore proportionately void of what goes to make real pleasure. This thought came home to me then as perhaps never before, and that little camp held for me more of luxury and blissful contentment than the most magnificently appointed city mansion can ever hold for the man who has never been denied a wish or a desire.

All record of time had been lost by me, and now I learned to my astonishment that I had been absent seventeen days. Since leaving Annootok I had not washed face or hands, for water in the Arctic winter is a scarce commodity. Neither had I shaved, and a look into my mirror revealed a very dirty, unkempt individual. I filled a large boiler with ice, put it over to melt, and presently experienced the supreme

## 210 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

enjoyment of a rub down with hot water and soap. Then I shampooed my head, and bathed it well with kerosene oil. My kumik-infested sleeping-bag was sent to Kudlar's igloo for safe keeping until it could be well beaten and aired, and the things I wore on the trip were placed outside in a box until some of the people might pick them. Finally, clean of body and raiment, I turned into my bunk for a long, restful, twelve hours' sleep.

When I awoke the shack was filled with Eskimos, who had come over from the igloos to welcome me back and express their pleasure at my return. This genuine demonstration of good feeling and hospitality touched me deeply. It was an exemplification of the human and really lovable side of the savage nature. Presently I returned the visit, calling in turn upon all my friends in the various igloos.

On January twenty-ninth Kulutinguah and his party came in from Inglefield Gulf, bringing to me my pocket compass which I had left on the *Erik*, and a letter from Captain Sam Bartlett (with greetings from Norton), stating that he had found the compass after I left the ship, and was leaving it with Eskimos at North Star Bay to bring north during the winter night. "I suppose you will receive this by Christmas time," the letter read. Kulutinguah had met the messengers. He also brought me two finely dressed sealskins for boots, a remembrance from Anahway, Eiseeyou's kooner.

Kulutinguah's party suffered severely on their trip. All of them had frozen faces, and Kuluting-





THE *ERIK* IN SMALL ICE

uah's, worst of all, looked very badly indeed. They told me that Awhella and Oxpuddyshou were following them to Annootok, and had met with fearful hardships on their southern walrus hunt. They had gone adrift a second time on the ice, escaping by the narrowest margin, and had finally been forced to abandon their effort to obtain walrus. I was sincerely thankful, when I heard this, that I had not accompanied them.

On the day of Kulutinguah's arrival one of the worst storms of the winter broke over the country. It seemed to me that I had never experienced such a gale. From the heavens above an avalanche of snow fell, and the wind tore loose, and swept before its mighty force, the great body of snow that already covered the earth, until one could not breathe beyond the shelter of igloo or shack. I ventured to thrust my head out of the tunnel leading from our shack, but was promptly forced back to cover, or I should have smothered. During the night of the thirtieth, however, the storm subsided, and the following morning when I arose we were released from its bondage and again free to move about.

I was in the shack near midday when an unusual excitement broke out among the Eskimos of the settlement. Every one began rushing wildly about and shouting incoherently. So great was the excitement, in fact, that for a moment I believed all of the people had suddenly gone problokto. I ran out at once to discover the cause of the trouble, and learned that Oxpuddyshou and Ahwella had been sighted in the

## 214 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

distance, returning from their unsuccessful walrus hunt. They had been absent twenty-one days, and when they arrived each of them had two seals left of what they had killed as the reward for the hard experience through which they had passed. They had seen large numbers of walrus in the water, but the conditions of the ice were such that none could be secured. Two big bulls had, indeed, been killed, but a southerly wind suddenly sprang up, the ice upon which the men were hunting went abroad, driving them out on a pan of young ice so flimsy that it could not support the weight of both men and game with safety, and the walrus carcasses had to be thrown into the sea. Oxpuddyshou lost two dogs, Awhella one. Finally, after a period of great suffering from intense cold and exposure, the men effected their escape when the floe upon which they were drifting providentially came in contact with the main ice.

The supply of food at the settlement was nearly exhausted, with now almost nothing remaining to feed the dogs. On the thirty-first, two of Kulutinguah's young dogs developed rabies, doubtless brought on by lack of nourishment, and it was found necessary to shoot them. Earlier in the day one of them, foaming at the mouth, attempted to bite me as I was entering its master's igloo, but I had no thought at the time that the animal was mad. In view of these conditions the Eskimos were planning to move their families to the southward with the coming of the light, as at this season hunting there was more likely to yield results than at Annootok.

In the meantime I was in need of fresh supplies from Etah, and with Kulutinguah and Kudlar to bring back loads, left Annootok on the morning of February first, long before the brief though lengthening twilight that we were now enjoying, broke in the east. It was very dark, but for a time traveling was not bad, and one's eyes soon became accustomed to the darkness. We did very well until we reached the ascent of the big mountain lying just back of Annootok, which has been mentioned in connection with previous journeys, and over which the trail lay. Here Kulutinguah asked me to drive his team while he walked around the mountain on the ice foot to look at some fox traps which he had set there. I was to drive the team over the mountain and meet him eight miles distant, where the trail turned out upon the frozen ocean.

Awhella, who had accompanied us as far as the hill, assisted me in making the ascent. Here he left me, and I took the whip. In the hands of a novice an Eskimo whip will perform some wonderful evolutions. It will do the most unexpected and surprising things, and is usually harmless to inflict punishment on anything except the novice who endeavors to manipulate it. It did not take the dogs long to discover my inexperience. In a very little while they were doing more or less as they chose. They even threatened once or twice to return to Annootok, and had they insisted would have taken me back there in spite of anything I could have done to prevent. But their curiosity and desire to see something of the



country ahead happily decided them to amble along at a most leisurely gait in the direction I wished to travel. I shouted, "*Huch huck!*"<sup>1</sup> and swung the whip in my efforts to dissuade them from facing about at such times as they seemed to waver in their decision to go ahead, and my temerity with the whip won me a sharp cut of the lash on one cheek, making a painful wound which bled profusely. Kudlar, blissfully indifferent to my troubles, never once looked back, and soon left me far in the rear.

On the whole, however, I did not do so badly until I came to the steep incline leading down to the frozen ocean. Kudlar was now out of sight, but my dogs knew he was ahead, and conceived a sudden and overwhelming desire to overtake him. Before I realized what was happening, or could do anything to prevent it, the team was dashing down the grade as fast as they could run. Desperately I tried to slacken the pace, and resorted to every means of which I knew to stop them in their wild run, but it was of no use. The pack was directly in front of the komatik when we reached the steepest point in the incline. The komatik was gathering momentum every instant. Suddenly I realized that a collision was inevitable. I could not control the sledge, nor steer it aside. The dogs could not run fast enough to clear it. The situation grew desperate. I pressed a foot hard down on the slippery crust on either side of the sledge in a wild endeavor to hold it back, but all I could do was futile to slacken the increasing speed. Faster

<sup>1</sup> The Eskimo "get-ap."



IN ELLESMERE LAND. HEAVY GOING



and faster we went, and at last the inevitable happened.

Half way down the incline the sledge struck the bunch of dogs squarely in the center, scattering them in every direction. The howling was terrible. One poor fellow was jammed under the komatik in such a manner that it was only after much hard work that I finally succeeded in extricating him, when I found he was so badly injured that it was necessary to cut his trace and leave him to follow as best he could.

Now my troubles began. A balky horse is not in it with ten Eskimo dogs. The team had lost what small confidence they might have had in me before. They had no respect for me now whatever. My orders to them to proceed were answered by sullen, threatening growls and snarls. They were like a pack of wolves at bay. They had decided, I believe, to eat me, and only the fact that they were bound by their traces prevented them from attacking. Finally one of them sprang at me. I met him with the butt end of the whip handle, and while I was beating him the whole bunch charged me. I retreated to a safe distance beyond the length of their traces, and wore myself out in vain endeavors to cut them with the whip lash, but my arm grew so tired finally that I had to give up attempts to subdue them.

There was nothing else left for me to do but seek Kudlar's assistance, so I turned the sledge over to anchor the dogs, and walked on half a mile, where I found him sitting on his komatik waiting for me. I explained to him my predicament, and very re-

luctantly he went back for the mutinous team, while I waited until he brought them down. The moment I resumed charge of them they were aware of it, and did much as they liked. But Kudlar was very good. He did not leave me behind again, and every little while pulled alongside to whip them into subjection and order.

When at length we reached the place where I was to meet Kulutinguah, he had not yet arrived, and I told Kudlar he might go on to Littleton Island, where he wished to open a cache, and I would wait. After two lonely hours Kulutinguah came around a point with three fine large blue foxes, and when the dogs glimpsed him they went wild with joy, and I was little less glad to see him.

The remainder of the journey to Etah was void of adventure, as was the return trip to Annootok, until we reached the summit of the steep hill where the trail drops down into Annootok. The sledges were heavily loaded with bags of coal and boxes of provisions. It was necessary to let these down the steep grades at the ends of harpoon lines, after unharnessing the dogs. Three harpoon lines were fastened together to get a good length, one end tied to the rear of our komatik and while Kulutinguah ahead guided the sledge I held to the lines, endeavoring to lower the weight gradually. My hands were so benumbed with cold, however, that in spite of my best efforts the line slipped through my fingers, and before we could prevent it the sledge got away from me and was dashing down the mountainside. It

gathered terrific momentum in its descent, struck a large stone on the way, and broke into three pieces, scattering the coal in every direction over the snow. Kulutinguah had a very narrow escape from being killed. He was holding the upstand at the rear of the sledge, for the purpose of steering, and was thrown with great force against a large boulder. Fortunately he escaped with nothing more serious than a bruised knee and arm.

Oxpuddyshou was preparing to move his family to Peterarwik in the course of a few days, waiting only for better light. He hoped to kill some walrus there, after which he was to return to Annootok and cross to Ellesmere Land to hunt musk-ox. I had determined to take advantage of the first opportunity that offered to go into the musk-ox country, and when I learned of Oxpuddyshou's plan, suggested to him that he engage with me as a guide for the hunt, offering a substantial reward. He agreed, and in the interim, before his walrus hunt, we decided to make a trip to Etah to bring up and get in readiness such supplies as we should need for the expedition.

On this trip to Etah we were accompanied by Awhella, who took his mother—the oldest Eskimo woman in that part of the country—to his Etah igloo. The weather was bitterly cold, and though we made a quick journey the poor old woman suffered a great deal. It was so cold, in fact, that on nearly every sledge journey noses and cheeks were pretty sure to be frozen. When we reached the shack I took the old woman in, started a fire as quickly as possible,

## 222 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

and gave her a good meal of biscuits and all the hot tea she could drink to warm her up. Then she walked over to her igloo quite comfortable and happy.

Sipsu and Tukshu, who were now stopping at Etah, came in just as I lay down to sleep, to pay me a visit. They were the noisiest Eskimos of the whole tribe, and rest was out of the question with them around, so I arose, made ready my supplies, loaded the sledges and turned back to Annootok at once.

It was on this return trip, which was a very good, though cold, one, that I noted the first bird life, with the exception of a few ptarmigans, that I had seen since the sun left us. Three ravens were observed, and it was pleasant indeed to see them. One who has never wintered in the Arctic can scarcely realize what the returning light and life means here to the exile. Steadily and rapidly the light of dawn was lengthening out, and I remember when I saw these black messengers from the outer world how I calculated that in another twenty days the good old sun would show us the glory of his upper limb. A few days later I saw other ravens, and Kulutinguah caught one alive in a trap. I never saw a more heavily feathered bird, and its coat was beautiful and glossy. A hare that he also caught had been partly devoured, apparently by some kind of hawk.

We arrived at Annootok in time to say good-by to Kudlar, who was leaving with his family for Etah, on his way still farther southward. He was one of the first of my friends to finally leave the settlement, and it gave me a pang of regret to see the fine old

fellow and his kooner, Tiney go. They had been very kind to me indeed. Their going began the final breaking up of our winter camp, with its many pleasant associations, and I realized how lonely and how very desolate a place Annootok would be when all the igloos were abandoned.

After a rest of fourteen hours I visited all of the igloos, and while there, just as the twilight was growing dim, Kulutinguah, Oxpuddyshou and Awhella came in, each with a large seal which they had killed a little to the northward. They hauled them into the igloos, and I witnessed the process of butchering and feasting that followed. There was nothing unusual about the butchery, except that the blood was saved and drunk in quantities by the people themselves, instead of being fed to the dogs. Then they gorged themselves on the raw, bloody meat and blubber. Even little youngsters, some of them not over three years of age, chewed the dripping meat and blubber, and soon every one of them was so covered with blood that they looked as though wholesale murder had been committed.

In connection with this I might mention a superstition among these people which forbids an Eskimo to eat hare until he has killed his first bear. On several occasions I offered hare meat to children. Invariably they asked me if it was *okoody* [hare], and when they learned that it was, passed it back to me without tasting it. Similar superstitions prevail as to ducks' eggs and deer's meat. With the lengthening twilight we were able to hunt hare again with



some success. It seemed to me that the fresh hare meat was superior in flavor to that of frozen deer's meat, and it was a most welcome addition to the menu.

One by one the families left us. Klayo came in one morning before I was up to give me a fine walrus tusk, and four sealskin bags she had made for my proposed musk-ox hunt in Ellesmere Land—one for tea, one for coffee, one for sugar and one for cartridges. She and Oxpuddyshou were leaving at once for Etah, thence to go farther south, and when he returned to join me on the musk-ox hunt it was uncertain whether she would be with him or whether I should ever see her again. Therefore she brought me these things as parting gifts in appreciation of my stay among her people.

The glorious light was growing rapidly. Presently a day came when at noontime the southeastern sky was illumined with marvelous red and orange colorings like the afterglow of a sunset. Our unaccustomed eyes blinked in the unusually strong light reflected by the glistening white blanket that enveloped the frost-crystalled snow and ice. We had grown very thin and peaked. Our complexion was a sickly shade of yellowish green. Even the Eskimos, whom I had believed unsusceptible to this change, had assumed it, and every one of us looked sick and weakly.

My time now was chiefly occupied in preparations for the musk-ox hunt. One of my oil stoves had been knocked badly out of shape, and had to be repaired, and new boxes made for their better protection in

traveling through the rough ice of Smith Sound. Cases of goods had to be made ready, and many chores to be done that had been neglected during the period of continuous night.

Long daily tramps on the ice foot varied the monotony. One day Billy Pritchard and I walked down to the boat, which it will be remembered had been abandoned several miles south of Annootok in the autumn. We found it deep buried under a drift, and shoveled it out. On our return we left the ice foot for the Sound ice, and Billy fell to his armpits in a snow-covered fissure. I had a great deal of trouble getting him out. In the fall he scraped both his arms badly and injured his left knee so severely that it was with difficulty he finally succeeded in walking back to camp. How the Eskimos are able to run over the rough ice I never could understand; but they do it with apparently no regard to the holes and cracks, and seldom fall or slip. I often tried to follow them, but was certain to be left far in the rear and to find every fissure and hole.

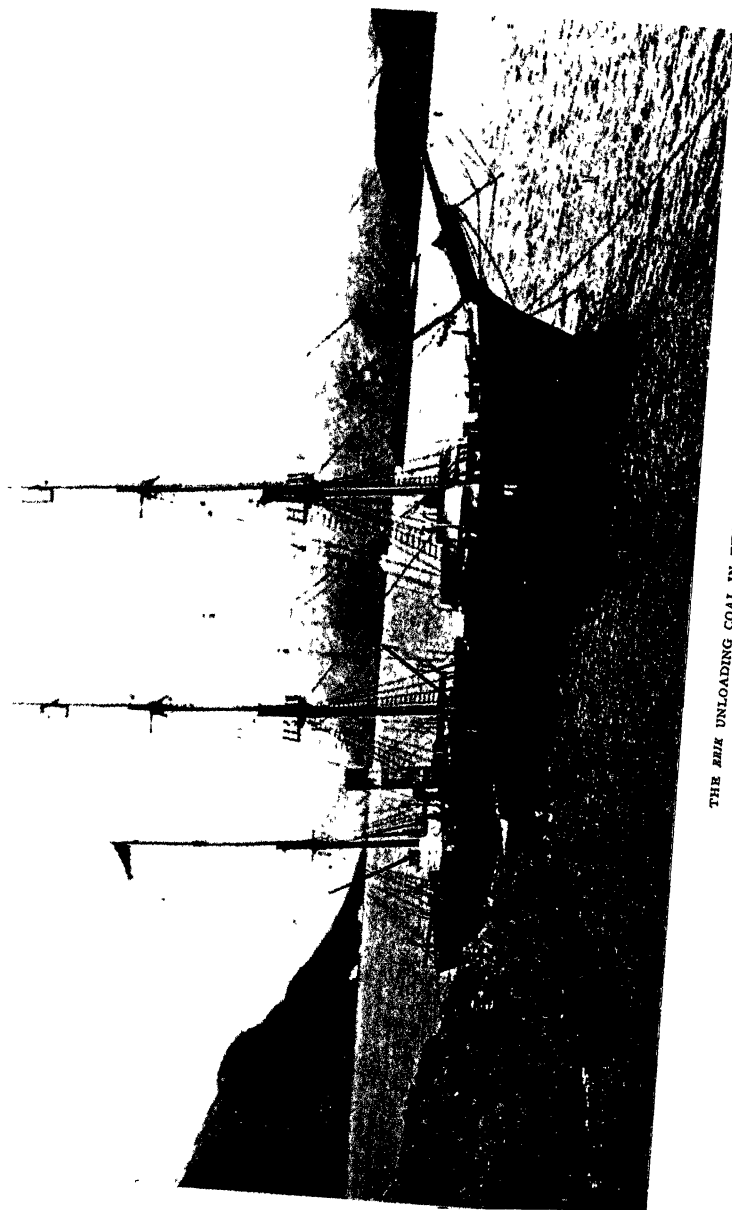
This was February eighteenth, the date that Mr. Peary told me he expected to leave the ship for his dash to the Pole. I recalled it after the return from our walk. In honor of it I opened a bottle and we drank his health, wished him the best of luck and hoped for his safe return. My own experiences during the six months that had elapsed since the *Erik* left me on the rocks at Etah had given me an insight into the difficulties and hardships of Arctic exploration, and brought to me a realization of the degree of

fortitude and determination required to attain success.

Recalling these experiences I was led to contrast my position at this time with that of exactly a year previous—as unlike as anything could be. Then I was in the mellow South shooting quail and snipe on the Satilla River, having fine luck and a splendid time. After the day's outing I returned to Plum Orchard with my friends, and Mr. George Carnegie gave me one of the fastest rides to Dungeness that I have ever had in an automobile. Dear old Dungeness! How I wished as I remembered all this that I might walk into the pantry there and help myself to the bounty of good things that it always held.

How tired one gets of the Arctic diet sometimes! It was the same things over and over again! Deer's meat, hare, walrus, with no vegetable other than canned corn to vary it. True, I had a good supply of canned tomatoes, but they always disagreed with me and I was forced to eschew them. I began to wonder, too, whether I would not have forgotten how to sit at table with civilized folk. My meals when in camp were eaten from the top of an upturned box, set alongside the stove. When Billy and the boatswain were there we all gathered around the same box, each grabbed a plate and flew at the food like hungry wolves, never waiting for things to be passed, or asking each other to pass them, but reaching for what we desired. One rule I tried to enforce—that no Eskimo should be in the shack at meal-time.





THE *EMK* UNLOADING COAL IN ETAK HARBOR

When traveling, of course, I had to live as the Eskimos did, and at such times share their lot and adapt myself to their methods and customs. I had enough of their society at these times to be quite satisfied to do without it when eating and sleeping in the shack.

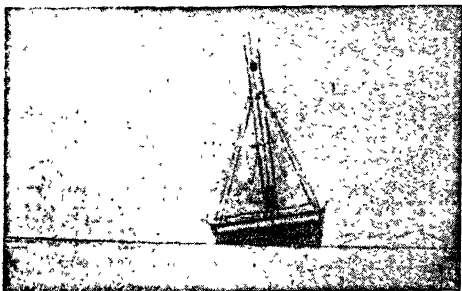
Washdays were the most trying periods of my life. I always dreaded them and always gave thanks when they were over. It was a tedious job to melt sufficient ice in my big copper boiler, and heat the water; and I always permitted a great many clothes to accumulate before I washed them. I never did wash them, in fact, until everything I had was soiled. Generally it was an all-day's job. I found that the toil was considerably lessened by soaking the clothes for a number of hours in water in which was mixed a liberal quantity of Pearline. Before washday was ended, however, I invariably had a severe backache.

For some time after my return from the walrus hunt below Cape Alexander, I suffered a great deal with lumbago, which shortened my walks, and which restricted exercise considerably, but there was plenty of work to keep me engaged, at such times, about camp. The oil stove that had been injured I mended very nicely, though at first it seemed a hopeless undertaking to put it into serviceable condition again. One never can tell what one can do until necessity drives one to it. Then I constructed a fishing rod, in anticipation of spring. This was made from wood cut from the running board of a broken sledge, worked down carefully with a knife, with guides

## 230 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

fashioned from the wire around the corks of the malt extract bottles which had frozen and broken earlier in the winter.

It was nearly time now for the sun to appear and we were awaiting his first greeting with impatience.





## XV

### THE RETURN OF THE SUN

WITH the decreased population Annootok assumed the air of a deserted village, and the empty igloos impressed upon me a new sense of loneliness. Kulutinguah had announced his intention of leaving shortly with his family, and then there would remain only Ilabrado, his kooner and two piccaninnies in the settlement. Traveling was very good, and on the day that Kulutinguah and Tongwe with their two piccaninnies made ready to go south I decided, with Ilabrado as driver, to break the monotony and take off the edge of the loneliness while awaiting Oxpuddyshou's return, by a run down to Etah for a few days' hare hunting. We needed the fresh meat, and hares were much more numerous there than at Annootok.

Kulutinguah started out before us, announcing that he would follow the ice foot instead of crossing the steep mountain, as it was a much easier though longer route when passable. Ilabrado and I, however, stuck to the old trail, and when we came again upon the frozen ocean after crossing the mountain Kulutinguah was nowhere to be seen and it was evident we were making better time than he. It was



nearly dark when we reached Littleton Island, and here I witnessed one of the most impressive and beautiful sky effects I have ever seen. This was not an aurora, nor yet anything resembling a sunset afterglow. The whole southwestern segment of the horizon was lighted by very bright silvery lights formed in an arch; but instead of coming down from the heavens, they were thrown up from the ice, and continually changed color and size. It was a phenomenon that I had not observed before and Ilabrado informed me that it was unusual and rarely seen.

A light wind from the north when we left Annootok had developed into a gale before our arrival at Etah and the night was very dark when the shack was at length reached. There was a big rent in the canvas roof, the place was nearly filled with snow, and we had a hard job clearing it out and straightening things up before a fire could be started in the stove. It was very cold, the high wind added to our difficulties, and we had to climb upon the roof with flat stones to make repairs. Several hours were thus consumed before we were free to lie down to sleep.

When I awoke in the morning the fire was out and a thermometer hanging near the head of my sleeping-bag registered twelve degrees below zero. The warped boxes of the shack admitted the wind to such an extent that we were unable to get the place warm, and after breakfast I sought the shelter of the sleeping-bag again, and was sleeping soundly when Kulutinguah and Tongwe arrived. Tongwe and one of the piccaninnies had their noses and cheeks painfully



ARCTIC HARE



frozen. They had passed through a very trying experience. At Cairn Point the ice was found so rough that in the gale and heavily drifting snow they had been compelled to stop and build a snow igloo for shelter. From Tongwe's account, she and one of the children must have nearly frozen to death. The little two year old in the bag on its mother's back seemed to have fared best of all and to have stood the trip without much hardship. I brewed hot tea for them and made them quite warm and comfortable before they left me to go over to their igloo.

Hare hunting was a failure. There were some of them around, but they so nearly matched the snow in shade that I could not see them until they ran, and neither Ilabrado nor I could get a shot; so, as Ilabrado had no food at Etah for his dogs, and the trip had served to break the monotony and loneliness, we turned back to Annootok, following the ice foot route this time that Kulutinguah had taken, and making a quick but cold journey.

We were glad indeed to reach shelter, for the wind was still strong, and shortly after our arrival shifted to the southward, and a blizzard wild and terrible broke upon us. No one could have traveled in it for long without a shelter. As quickly as it came the storm subsided, and when I arose on the second morning after our return, the sky was clear, not a breath of air stirred, and the weather was perfect though intensely cold.

The red glow at noontime in the southeast was daily increasing. Indeed the sun was already, ac-

according to astronomical reckonings, above the horizon, though as yet we could not see it, for our position was entirely shut in save to the westward directly across Smith Sound, where the dark cliffs of Cape Sabine and Victoria Head rose, plainly visible. Billy Pritchard was with me now in the shack and we were both impatiently eager to get a first glimpse of the Arctic sunrise. With this in view we climbed a high mountain behind Annootok, but to our disappointment still higher mountains to the southward foiled our hope.

On our return I met with a painful accident. The snow on the mountain side was packed and frozen into solid ice, upon which it was almost impossible to get a foothold. I slipped in the descent and was shot down over the smooth surface for nearly fifty yards, when I struck a large boulder with considerable force. My left leg was so badly injured that for a long while I could not step upon it. When I managed at length to hobble back to the shack the leg was badly swollen and for the remainder of the day I could not get around at all. Fortunately, however, no bones were broken, and though the swelling continued for several days I was able to resume my walks on the ice foot and was out as usual the following morning.

This, too, was a beautiful day, though bitterly cold, with the highest temperature during twenty-four hours, thirty-four degrees below zero. The highest tide during my northern sojourn came in, flooded the ice foot and drove me back to land, and while walk-

ing here I flushed a flock of ptarmigans, which rose with a noise similar to that of Scotch grouse.

Far out on the Sound the peaks of icebergs reflected the sun's rays. Though we were still in shadow my eyes were so unaccustomed to light that in another vain attempt to see the sun from the mountain I returned suffering a partial attack of snow-blindness, and resolved not to venture again far from camp alone, at least not until my eyes had grown more used to the light.

Bess, a fine dog which Peary had taken home with him to Maine and brought back on the *Roosevelt*, was stricken at this time and died. One of her pups was also taken ill with fits. Ilabrado told me that a great many of the dogs were taken ill each year with the return of light and many of them died.

Billy and I could hardly restrain our impatience to see the sun. Shafts of light and direct rays glinting on the icebergs far out on Smith Sound tantalized us, and one day we took a long walk in that direction in the hope of seeing the sun himself at midday. The temperature was thirty-six degrees below zero and not a breath of wind stirring when we left camp; but before we had gone many miles a blue smoke settled over the distant reaches of ice, and very suddenly when we had walked some three hours directly away from land a strong wind set in from the south, the sky clouded and snow began to fall, completely obscuring the shore. In a very little while the wind assumed the proportions of a gale and a blizzard was raging, so furious that we completely

lost our way. Fortunately, however, we kept the general direction of land, but when we reached shore and located ourselves found we were far north of camp. We were all but exhausted by this time, but there was nothing to do but keep going, for to remain inactive would have been to freeze to death in a short time, and by a tremendous effort we at length reached Annootok in safety.

All night the storm raged, and it was late the following afternoon before the wind shifted suddenly to the northward with a falling temperature and the storm abated. But all day we were kept prisoners within the shack and I busied myself sewing small canvas bags in which to carry things on my proposed trip to Ellesmere Land, in making a saucepan out of kerosene tins and in general mending.

I had just returned from a long walk and vain hunt for hare the next evening when Ilabrado's kooner came rushing over to tell me two sledges were coming down the hill. This was good news, for, isolated as we were, additions to our small circle were welcome, and I went out with her to meet the visitors. They proved to be Eiseeyou with his kooner Anahway, and Oxpuddyshou with his kooner Arnenier. This was not the same Oxpuddyshou who had been with me all winter, but another man of the same name—a younger brother of Kulutinguah. His kooner was one of the best looking Eskimo women I have ever seen. On the two sledges they brought a deer and a half, two fine deerskins, three hareskins which had been removed with head and feet attached, for







ARCTIC HARE

mounting, and a pair of large walrus tusks—these last in return for some cartridges I had given Eisee-you. A portion of the meat was for us, and it was very acceptable indeed, as our stock of fresh meat was nearly exhausted. Eiseeyou took possession of Kulutinguah's old igloo, and here I spent an hour chatting, while I watched them clean deer and seal-skins. This was always exceedingly interesting to me, for I never ceased to marvel at the dexterity with which they removed fat and grease without soiling the hair side of skins.

The following day was snowy and all the Eskimos spent the hours of daylight in the shack with Billy and me. We had the place well warmed and they perspired like folk in the hot room of a Turkish bath; moisture oozed out of their pores and ran off their faces in rivulets, and the odor was anything but pleasant, for sealskin clothing has a very strong smell when heated.

The sky remained overcast for several days after Billy and I made our trip out on the ice of Smith Sound in vain endeavor to see the sun, and every day it snowed; sometimes mildly with little wind, sometimes in a raging blizzard. The three families of Eskimos now at Annootok were preparing to leave us on the first fair day that came; even Ilabrado was now to move south. Annootok was to be deserted indeed, with no other human life there than Billy and me. In prospect of their going I spent a good deal of my time in the igloos with them. While I was there one evening Anahway and Ar-

nenier cut up a whole hind-quarter of deer, placing the pieces carefully at one side and eating none. This was most unusual, and I asked what they were to do with it. Tears welled up in Anahway's eyes as she explained to me that her mother was buried near the top of one of the low mountains near by and this meat she was to leave at the grave.

The Eskimos do not bury their dead in the ground. The bodies are enclosed in skins, carried to some high eminence and covered thickly with boulders as a protection against wild beasts. It is a custom among them to carry food to deceased loved ones several times a year and the choicest morsels are selected.

The Eskimos were to leave Annootok the morning after the incident referred to above, and some time before daylight Eiseeyou came down to the shack to call me. Donning warm clothing I joined them at once at the igloos, where I found Anahway ready for her pilgrimage to the grave. She invited me to join her, and together we climbed the mountain. Snow was deep, the walking very hard, and over a part of the distance we were on hands and knees, pulling ourselves out of deep snow-drifts.

Dawn was just showing dimly in the east when the burial place was reached. Anahway placed me at the foot of the grave, where she instructed me to stand. Then she took off her mittens, pulled back her hood, baring her head, and assuming a half kneeling position at the head of the grave began talking to her mother, relating to her all the recent happenings, and telling her of the success of their immediate

family in the hunt; how Teddylinguah, her son (Anahway's brother), had killed a deer and a walrus; of the numbers of walrus Eiseeyou and Teddylinguah had killed; of the weather; and about my stay with them and that I was at the grave with her. All this I could understand very well. Then with naked hands she pulled away the snow which covered the rocks at the head of the body, and placed in between the boulders small, choice pieces of deer and walrus meat, talking as she did so and crying all the while as though her heart would break. I could not get the import of what she said, for her sobs made her words unintelligible. When the meat was all placed she mumbled some sentences which I could not understand, followed by a brief silence. Finally she rose to her feet and made several signs and passes with her hands over the head of the grave, then walked around the grave four times, being very particular after the first circuit to step precisely where she had stepped before, and to carefully brush every bit of snow from leg and foot, each time she lifted a foot, before taking the next step. All this time she kept up a kind of chant, half talking, half singing, while the tears rolled down her cheeks.

At the end of the fourth turn around the grave she seized my arm and told me the story of how her father had carried her mother up from the old igloo, and they had buried her there, and no one had lived in the igloo since, for Eskimos abandon igloos in which people die and they are never used again. She also told me that adults were always buried with

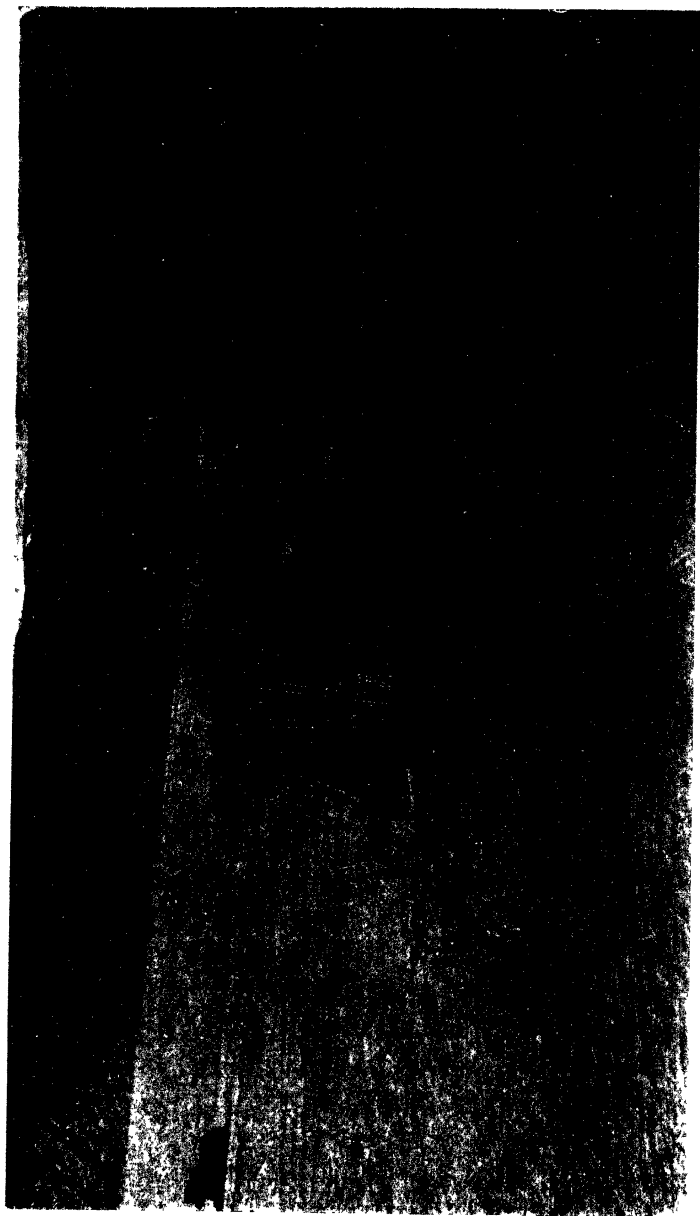
## 244 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

head toward the east, while children were buried with head to the north. She pointed out to me a bright star that she told me was her mother's spirit, and explained to me how, when people die, their spirits pass from the body to become stars in heaven to watch over those they have left behind. Eskimos were few, stars were innumerable, so she reasoned that vast numbers of these stars were the spirits of white folk who had died in the faraway lands of which she knew nothing.

Presently we turned from the grave to retrace our steps to the settlement, and almost instantly all traces of her grief disappeared and she laughed and talked as cheerfully as ever. I thanked her for the privilege of visiting the grave, but she assured me she was glad I had been able to go with her, for her mother was very fond of *Kablunoks* [white people], and, she was certain, was pleased at my going.

We had a hard walk back to camp, for the morning was warm—the lowest temperature registered during the day nine degrees below zero, the warmest four degrees above—and my heavy winter furs, not suited to active exercise in moderate weather such as this, bathed me in perspiration.

For some reason the Eskimos did not start for Etah until late in the afternoon. Before going Ilabrado gave me a valuable and highly prized relic—a little china gravy bowl picked up at Fort Conger a few years before by one of his sons and supposed to have belonged to the Greely Expedition. He also had some law books that had belonged to Greely.



SEAL HUNTING—THE SEALS ARE SHOT THROUGH A HOLE IN A WHITE CLOTH OR HARESKIN SCREEN



Billy and I were alone now at Annootok with not even a dog howl to break the monotonous silence. We slept late the next morning and arose to find the day warm and clear, though made unpleasant by a north wind and shifting snow. Far out the ice pinacles that rose above the frozen sea were reflecting sunlight and we determined to make another effort to see the sun himself. With this object we walked directly westward over the frozen surface of Smith Sound for perhaps five miles, when a high island of ice was encountered, which we climbed, and upon the most elevated point waited for the sun to reach the meridian.

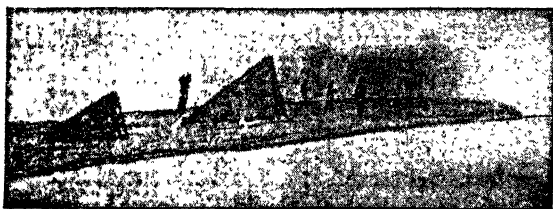
Here we watched for half an hour, when suddenly the good old sun appeared through a gap in the mountains, and both of us shouted together, "There he is! There he is!" It was glorious! It thrilled me and made my heart beat faster. It inspired us with new ambition and made life seem a good deal more worth while. In a few minutes he dropped again from view, but that one glimpse swept away the gloom that had unconsciously settled upon our souls during the long months since he left us. This was March eleventh. We made our way back to camp and drank "to the return of the sun."

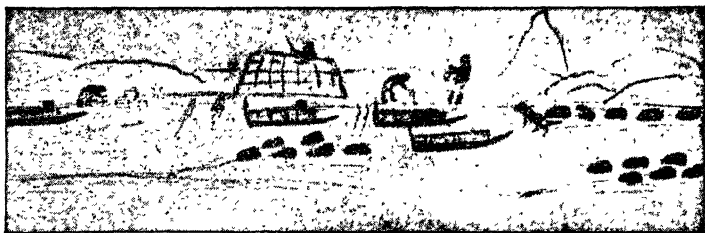
During this period we were favored with gorgeous sky colorings. Some of the effects were beautiful beyond description, and often every color of the spectrum might be seen reaching up from horizon to zenith, awe-inspiring and wonderful. Usually, too, they were of longer duration than any I had ever



before observed. Add to this the maze of icebergs and rafted ice which mighty powers had piled in hills hundreds of feet high stretching out over Smith Sound; the towering Greenland mountains behind; endless reaches of white, everywhere encrusted with prismatic frost flakes and sparkling in the light of coming day—a wilderness rugged and repellent, and at the same time possessing a unique, transcendent beauty that attracted and fascinated.

We were very happy in the thought that the night had passed and the glorious old sun had actually returned again with his life-giving, hope-giving, inspiring power.





## XVI

### WHEN THE ESKIMOS LEFT US

**A**NNOOTOK was a pretty lonely place after the Eskimos left us. Billy and I, thrown entirely upon our own resources, took walks on the ice foot and I tramped over the back country, sometimes to hunt hares but generally with poor success for they were exceedingly wild and we were rarely able to see them until they scurried away out of range. Though we did not yet have the direct rays of the sun, my eyes gave me a great deal of trouble when out on these tramps. They seemed unable at first to accustom themselves to even the modified light we had and became red and inflamed. Sometimes after my return from walks they burned horribly and I experienced the sensation of wishing to dig them out with my fingers.

One of the first excursions Billy and I took together was to the northward in the hope of killing seals. I carried my 30-40 rifle while he was provided with a harpoon and staff. We found the ice in good shape for seals and normally they should have been plentiful, but for some reason the blow-holes were scarce and we saw none.

We had gone some eight miles from camp and had

been on the ice five hours, when very suddenly clouds began to gather and in an indescribably short time the whole heavens were as black as ink—much the same in appearance as when a big thunder-storm gathers. Almost immediately a heavy wind rose from the south. Instead of turning about, we very indiscreetly continued going away from camp until snow began to fall. We were on the sea ice at this time and immediately land was blotted from view.

Distances on the ice are very deceiving and hard to judge under the best of conditions, and now the conditions were about as bad as they could be. We got into rough ice and soft snow-drifts in fighting our way against the blizzard toward the shore. Happily, however, we did not get confused as to direction and finally reached the ice foot a considerable distance north of camp.

With the full force of the storm now directly in our faces we were forced frequently to rest, but at length, exhausted to the last degree, reached our shelter. We had started out at a quarter past nine in the morning and it was twenty-five minutes before nine in the evening when we returned. Billy voiced the sentiments of both when he exclaimed, "No more getting so far away on the ice for me without Eskimos and sledges!"

For several days I was so ill that I became alarmed at my condition. My back ached, I had a high fever, was so weak I could not walk far or exercise, and could not sleep. I feared that I might not be well enough to go on the musk-ox hunt when Oxpuddy-

shou should arrive. After experimenting with various kinds of medicines I took several Tully's tablets one night, slept well and late into the next morning, and arose feeling much better save the continuance of pains in my back.

The sun could now be seen over the low hills. In a few days more he would climb over the higher mountains and cast his rays through the little window in our camp. The chemical change in the atmosphere caused by the sunlight may have had something to do with my illness. I was gradually losing my yellowish-green complexion, however, and my skin began taking on a normal color. When I first saw myself in a mirror, after the return of full daylight, I must confess that this unnatural appearance of my skin, giving me the look of a man deathly sick, startled me with momentary fright. As stated before, even inanimate things had assumed this peculiar tinge. For example, upon unpacking a box containing a pair of bearskin trousers, which had been quite white when put away in the fall, I found them now very yellow, though rubbing with snow made them white again. Several other things in my bag were also very yellow.

The weather was even colder than during the sunless period, though the direct rays of the sun gave appreciable warmth. We had many days when the thermometer recorded thirty-five degrees below zero as the highest temperature during twenty-four hours. One had to be very careful at all times not to touch bare hands to metal, wood, ice or any hard material;

## 252 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

for bare flesh would fasten instantly to it and become painfully frost-bitten, leaving wounds like burns. I took out my rifles one day to try them, and forgetting to breathe on a trigger before pulling it tore the skin from the finger where it touched the metal. Ice put into the kettle to melt sent out volleys of reports like whole packs of fire-crackers discharged at once.

Billy and I cut our last piece of fresh meat one day, and our coal supply finally reached so low an ebb that we were driven to strict economy in its use and kept so slight a fire that the shack was far from comfortable. Hares were the only animals in the vicinity to hunt, and they were so wild and scarce that only once, after several days hunting assiduously for them, did I succeed in killing one. Nothing could be done for our relief without the assistance of Eskimos and dogs.

A short distance south of Annootok is a low hill and by climbing to the top of it one can get a good view of the frozen sound for a long way to the southward. Not a day passed that Billy or I did not make a pilgrimage to its summit to scan the trail in the hope of sighting dog-teams coming north. I was here one day when I saw a black object three or four miles distant, slowly making its way through the rough ice toward camp. Eskimos were coming at last! In spite of myself I grew excited. It was pleasing to know that we were to have some one with us again.

I ran down to camp to tell Billy the good news,

and together we walked out to meet our visitor, who proved to be Sipsu. It was very cold—the highest temperature registered during the day being forty degrees below zero—and the poor fellow had his face badly frozen. He had brought me four hares and a large walrus liver and heart. We took him to the shack at once and I prepared for him a good meal of corn mush, tea, and biscuits.

Sipsu was one of the best men in the tribe but of a very excitable disposition, and when we met him he was so excited and talked so rapidly I could at first understand but little of what he said, but at length comprehended that old Oxpuddyshou would be in Annootok very shortly, prepared to go with me to Ellesmere Land for musk-ox. This was very good news.

Sipsu reported a great many walrus off Nockme but said that the ice was very bad and hunting dangerous. He and Kulutinguah had killed four a few days earlier, but before they could get them to land the ice went abroad and the walrus were lost. Sipsu was to remain with us two days. This, according to my reckoning, of which I was by no means certain, was March twenty-second.

Late the next evening Oxpuddyshou arrived. He, too, had a badly frozen face. He said he should have reached us the previous night but the head wind was so strong he was compelled to stop half way up from Etah and build a snow igloo for shelter. He brought us three hares, one walrus liver, and best of all, two sacks of coal. Walrus liver is very good,

though like the flesh of all aquatic animals, has a decidedly fishy flavor.

Oxpuddyshou came particularly to tell me that two of Awhella's dogs had died, that he could get none from the other Eskimos, and his own team was so much reduced it would be impossible to go after musk-ox for the time being. After talking the matter over with the two men, I decided to have them ask Eiseeyou if he would not engage with me for the trip. I should have gone with them to Nockme myself to see Eiseeyou, and to spend a few days witnessing the walrus-hunt, but this would have left Billy absolutely alone at Annootok.

On the twenty-third the highest temperature recorded was forty-one degrees below zero. The lowest record I did not get, as the marker on my thermometer became jammed at fifty degrees below. One must actually experience this low temperature to fully comprehend what it means. I have often been asked whether one can really notice any difference between thirty and fifty degrees below zero. My answer is, yes, most decidedly. I froze two fingers very painfully on this day, picking up a small piece of ice just brought into camp, to put in the kettle. It stuck to my fingers and I had to pour cold water on it to free them from it.

The Eskimos were up very early to make ready for their return southward. I prepared them a good breakfast of hot cornmeal and tea, with all the biscuits they cared for—food of which they were very fond—helped them load their komatiks, and they left

us. I sent with them to Etah a box of curios I had collected during the winter, including my extra pair of bearskin trousers. Before the day was over I was sorry I had sent the trousers.

There was no certainty when the Eskimos would come back, or when we should be able to renew our coal supply. The two bags, thoughtfully brought up by Oxpuddyshou, eliminated the fear of immediate famine; but nevertheless we felt that it would be only wise to continue economy in its use and reserve our scant supply chiefly for cooking. In consequence, camp was very cold and uncomfortable and I spent much of the day tramping and taking photographs. During a walk I climbed an iceberg and in descending slipped and tore my bearskin trousers so badly that I was forced to retreat to camp at once.

But now fortune favored me. The following day was excessively cold until evening, when the temperature took a sudden rise and snow began falling. I remained indoors and was just dozing off to sleep in the evening when all at once dogs began howling outside. I rushed out, and there, to my great delight, was Ilabrado and his kooner with two sacks of coal and three sacks of ewey grass for me. Ewey grass is found at the foot of the little Aux rookeries near Etah, and is worn by the Eskimos in their boots to absorb moisture.

I hurried my friends into the shack, delivered the wreck of my bearskin trousers to the kooner, and while I cooked them a good hot supper, she mended them perfectly. They had run up for the night, and



insisted upon returning south the following morning, giving as their reason, when I urged them to remain another day, that they had left the little piccaninnies alone and must get back to them.

More good fortune favored us. A day or two after Ilabrado's visit I was shoveling away snow behind the shack in search of buried boxes to utilize for kindling wood, when I came upon a forgotten sack of coal. It was like finding gold! It gave us fuel and comfort.

My face was a spectacle at this time. All winter I had been freezing and refreezing it, and now it began to peel in great, unsightly splotches, and was very sore. When one's face becomes frost-bitten the skin turns dark, and finally when the dead skin comes off white patches are left to mark the frosted places.

For two or three days we had very changeable weather. Now it would snow, now clear and the sun would come out from behind the clouds warm and fine. It was a delightful sensation to feel its heat after its long absence. But at length came thick snow—the wind terrific—and day after day it lasted until it lengthened into the longest continuous storm of the winter.

The enforced confinement without exercise and the continuous wind began finally to act upon my nerves. I remember lying awake one evening listening to the wind's mournful soughing and high-pitched shrieks as it beat against the shack, until I imagined that some one outside was crying for help and then moan-

ing in mortal agony, or begging to be admitted. Billy was sleeping. Three times I got up and passed out into the tunnel, very certain that some one was there. It was a night of nerve torture. I slept very little and was glad indeed when day broke, and with daylight the wind subsided.

The snow continued but the lessened wind made it possible to go out. The temperature had risen to eight degrees above zero, and donning light clothes I took a long, refreshing tramp on snow-shoes. I had been out for three hours and the snow had ceased, when the sun broke through a bank of mist and the atmosphere became very smoky. Following this change heavy black clouds appeared in the southwest and in all its radiance and beauty a perfect rainbow appeared against them. For a short time the rainbow rested there, but presently faded, the sky became heavily overcast, the wind, previously from the south, shifted suddenly to the north, and a fresh gale was in progress with snow falling thick. In three hours there was a drop of fourteen degrees in temperature.

A new dreariness had taken possession of the landscape. Previous to the storm, dark bare rocks lay out against the white to break the dreadful monotony of glare. Now every vestige of them had disappeared and everywhere nothing but snow—snow—snow met the gaze. It ate into one's eyes and burned them, even more it seemed to me in cloudy than in bright weather.

In periods of inactivity during the long night I had

read a great deal. Fred Norton gave me a box of books when the *Erik* left for the south, and Mr. Peary and Captain Bartlett gave me several more. All of these I had read—some of them more than once—and now when the storms held me indoors I longed for more. The old ones had become stale. This was a reason why confinement indoors seemed harder to bear than at any previous time during the winter.

On the afternoon of April second one of the worst storms of my whole Arctic experience broke upon us. On the morning of that day Billy and I, with snow-shoes, turned southward for a walk. The sky was cloudy when we left camp and a light south breeze was blowing. We had gone but a short distance when the wind, steadily increasing, had assumed the proportions of a gale. Snow began to fall and the drift was so bad it blinded us. Every moment the storm grew in force and we were glad indeed when we finally gained the shelter of camp. A little later Billy went outside for a bucketful of coal, and when he returned declared that in those few minutes the storm had grown to such proportions he could not breathe while facing it.

Although I had encountered some terrible storms and gales during the preceding eight months, this I can safely say was the worst of my experience. I had never seen anything to compare with it. The cold was intense. Beyond the shelter of the igloo no man could have survived for more than an hour or two. By half-past nine in the evening we began to

fear the shack would be swept away before the hurricane, and both Billy and myself donned our heaviest fur clothing in anticipation of its going.

The Arctic snow during the periods of low temperature is of a peculiar quality, frozen into hard, sand-like grains as fine as flour. As it was driven before the gale it gave out a peculiar hissing sound, so loud that one had to shout to be heard a few feet distant. I can liken this sound only to that made by a large stream of water playing upon a hot fire. Both Billy and I wondered where Peary and his men were, and we prayed for the safety of all those to the north of us.

How the wild animals survive these blizzards is beyond my understanding. Their ability to gain a living, even in periods of calm, is one of the wonders of the Arctic. During the winter months the earth and meager herbage is buried beneath four or five feet of hard-packed snow, and beasts and birds must dig to the bottom to find food.

As the hours passed the storm appeared to increase, if possible, in fury. Neither of us could sleep. We began to feel apprehensive for the safety of our Eskimo friends to the southward. Only the thick walls of snow-blocks piled around our little box camp preserved it. I shall never understand how, even with this protection, it was not carried away.

We did not attempt to sleep all night, and after breakfast, when we found it necessary to bring in coal from the sacks at the entrance of the tunnel, found ourselves snowed in with the tunnel practically.

## 260 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

filled with drift. It was a long, tedious job to burrow our way out. When this was accomplished I discovered that a mighty drift had formed against the north side of the camp and this it was that probably preserved the shack from destruction. I was quite certain that had I ventured at this time even a few yards from the mouth of the tunnel I could never have found my way back.

By the morning of the second day of the storm holes had been eaten through the snow blocks piled on the south side of the shack, and snow began to drift in between the boxes. I repaired the damage as best I could in the little while that it was possible to remain outside. Before the gale began, the ground surrounding the camp had been covered with three or four feet of snow as hard as ice. Now upon emerging to attempt repairs to the snow-block protection, I discovered that the wind had eaten the ice-like snow away and swept the rocks bare.

Our coal was nearly gone and I set up my oil stoves and brought a case of oil into camp. To economize fuel we spent the greater part of our time in sleeping-bags. It was the only way to keep comfortable. While lying there I was profoundly thankful I had not gone on a musk-ox or walrus hunt.

On the fourth night of the storm a section of our tunnel was carried away. Little could be done then to repair the damage, but during the next night the wind subsided, and when morning broke the sun shone clear and bright. The broken section of the tunnel had scarcely been rebuilt, and weakened sections on

the southern side of camp strengthened when, at eleven o'clock, the sky was suddenly hidden by ink-black clouds, and the wind, now shifted from south to north, rose again to a gale. In an incredibly short time the storm had grown again to its former proportions, and with the added terror of a much lower temperature. A number of cracks opened in the wall of our shack, and with no way of stopping them our position grew very uncomfortable. A cup of water set a little distance from the stove froze solid in a few minutes.

The storm had continued for twelve days, with only one or two intermissions of a few hours. When finally it subsided and we were released from confinement, a great change had taken place in the appearance of the country. Thick, ice-like snow which had hidden rocks and land had been swept away, and great stretches were left bare. Mighty drifts had been formed. Familiar icebergs had been so transformed in shape that they were hardly recognizable. The channel out in Smith Sound had opened up and as far as vision could reach a streak of black water extended northward. Rising from this a heavy bank of fog hung over Cape Sabine.

For the first time since the return of the sun the frozen, contracting ground began to crack with cannon-like reports. At times the noise resembled a Fourth-of-July celebration. Sometimes, when cracks occurred near camp, we could feel the ground beneath us shake, and the shack trembled.

Our coal practically gone, we were in anything but

a comfortable position. Such parts of the boxes of which the shack was built that could be broken off without destroying the building itself, were utilized as fuel to help out our diminishing stock of oil.

Our fresh meat had dwindled away until now only two legs of a hare remained. I devoted myself to hunting, but hares were so wild and scarce that as a result of several days' effort I killed but one. While on one of these hunting expeditions I was walking without snow-shoes over the crust-covered top of a very deep drift, when without warning I broke through and sank to my armpits, my legs jammed so that for a time I could not move them, and the more I struggled to release myself the deeper I sank. After a long time, and when nearly exhausted, I succeeded in extricating myself, but I had experienced a narrow escape from burial alive in the snow, and learned the lesson never to cross deep drifts, no matter how hard a covering of crust they appeared to have, without snow-shoes. These drifts were from ten to twenty feet in depth, and one might easily have sunk so deep in them that escape would have been impossible without assistance.

On two occasions during this period I observed remarkable meteorological phenomena worthy of mention. One a gorgeous sunset, the predominating color of which was dark purple with constantly varying shades. The sky colorings were unlike those of any sunset I had ever before seen, and the changing shades lent it a marvelous beauty quite beyond the power of description.



RESTING THE DOGS





The other phenomenon occurred, according to my reckoning, on the day before Easter. It was a very cold day, with a rising north wind before which the snow was shifting, and drifting heavily around the mountain-tops. Billy and I had been walking and were returning late in the afternoon with frozen cheeks and noses. As we approached camp I remarked that the drifting snow had formed into a dark cloud near the peak of one of the mountains. Through the cloud the sun shone in two direct, powerful streams, which had the appearance of two permanent search-lights trained in opposite directions. Surrounding the snow-cloud, in a complete circle, or halo, was a luminous rainbow appearing in an exceptionally wide band, with unusually bright colors—I never saw brighter. Its duration was fifteen minutes and it was so unusual that I sat upon a cake of ice and watched it until at length it faded from view.

We were becoming worried at the long delay of the Eskimos in coming to our relief. They were well aware of our shortage of coal and meat and some of them were to have been in Annootok with loads of supplies from Etah long before. Our shack, through lack of coal to heat it, was very uncomfortable at all times. On Easter Sunday night I in some way pulled the coverings off my head while sleeping and painfully froze my right ear. We frequently climbed a high mountain back of camp to view the horizon to the southward to watch for sledges, but day after day met only with disappointment.

When out one day I came upon the tracks of a large flock of ptarmigans. The birds were nowhere to be seen, however, and I zigzagged up the mountainside hoping that I might find them, but did not see a feather. After this I kept a sharp lookout for them, for their flesh is delicious and we needed them for food. The following day I found where they had spent the night in the hard snow. They had made for themselves a perfect little snow igloo—as perfect a dome as an Eskimo could have made. It was covered with a hard crust, and opening to the south with a small hole through which the birds passed in and out. The flock must have flown to and from this, for there were no tracks coming or going, and the only tracks to be seen were directly around the door, where they had scratched snow out of the interior of the igloo. This was doubtless instinctive precaution, to avoid the possibility of foxes following them to their shelter. On my way back to camp I was fortunate enough to walk into a bunch of six, and my .22 rifle brought two of them down before the remainder took to the wing and passed out of range. They are very difficult to see, as they match exactly with the snow, with the exception of their eyes and a little splotch of black on their wing-tips.

Billy and I were getting ready for bed that night when some pups, which we had outside, began howling. I took a look out, but could see no cause for the disturbance, and returned. The pups, however, continued to howl so loudly that finally Billy dressed in his fur clothing, climbed a small hill which lies just

south of camp, for a look about. In a few moments he came back on a run to announce that four sledges were coming. I arose at once and started a fire in the stove with wood, and in a little while had the place warmer than it had been in many, many days, for we knew that the sledges would have a fresh supply of coal for us.

Presently the boatswain, Murphy, arrived with four sledges, each in charge of an Eskimo, and bringing the coal and other necessities for which we had been looking so long. Murphy had been with the Eskimos at Nockme for several days, where they were endeavoring to kill sufficient walrus to leave their families well supplied before they came to Annootok to go on the musk-ox hunt. The ice continued in bad shape, and they had been poorly rewarded, though Murphy had made a very good trade in walrus tusk ivory and fox skins.

We had partaken of a meal of beans and bacon, which I prepared upon the arrival of the party, and were getting ready for bed, when the four Eskimos rushed into camp in a high state of excitement. They talked so rapidly that for a little time I could make nothing of what they said, but at length learned that three men had been sighted far away to the northwest on the ice of Smith Sound, walking toward camp. I ran out with the Eskimos at once and with difficulty distinguished three moving black specks, so far off that at first I was not at all certain I saw them. Eskimos have a remarkable power of vision, far superior to the white man's. The travelers were

approaching from Ellesmere Land. Who they were we could not imagine, for none of our people had crossed during the winter, and it was remarkable that these men were without dogs.

I told the Eskimos to get their dogs and sledges ready at once, hurried into warm fur clothing, and was barely in time, so rapidly did the Eskimos work, to jump upon Ilabrado's sledge as it dashed over the ice-foot to meet the approaching travelers.

Sipsu was a long way ahead of us, Tukshu next and Ilabrado and myself behind. For two miles the going was smooth and fine, and the komatiks kept their places; then, just as we reached the rough ice, the traces of Tukshu's dogs became entangled and we passed him. Ilabrado had a big team of twelve dogs and we soon passed Sipsu also, and a mile beyond the smooth ice were the first to meet the three tired, hungry travelers—a white man and two Eskimos, though there was little in their outward appearance to distinguish the one from the other.

Great was my astonishment when the white man introduced himself as Dr. Frederick A. Cook, whom we had come to believe had long since perished in the North. The two Eskimos were Ahwelah and Etukishuk, his sole companions during a long period of wandering. For nearly two years they had been cut off from all civilization—for the greater part of this period from even the companionship of Eskimos. For the first time in more than a year Dr. Cook was enabled to converse in his native tongue, for his Eski-

mos spoke no English. He was as greatly astonished to meet a white man here as I was to meet him.

The three men were sights to behold. Human beings could not be more unkempt. They were half starved and very thin, terribly dirty, and Dr. Cook, like the Eskimos, had long hair reaching to his shoulders. For many months they had been without dogs and had hauled a sledge a long distance from the southward. Open water had prevented their taking a direct course across Smith Sound from Cape Sabine, and they had been forced to make a long detour to the northward to accomplish the passage. In the very rough ice they abandoned the sledge, and made their course direct for Annootok, which at this time could be seen plainly in the distance.

It was most interesting to witness the Eskimos' greeting. Ahwelah and Etukishuk standing together, Tukshu, Sipsu and Ilabrado facing them at a little distance, they gazed at each other for a few moments, and then all together began talking very fast and a great deal.

After a short delay we turned back to camp, Dr. Cook on the sledge with Ilabrado and me, Ahwelah with Tukshu, who I learned was his brother, and Etukishuk with Sipsu. In camp the hungry men enjoyed a good hot meal, then slept for several hours, after which Sipsu and Etukishuk, with a team made up of Sipsu's dogs and several of Ilabrado's, went back on the ice and late in the day brought in the abandoned sledge.

Dr. Cook was much astonished to learn that I had remained in this God-forsaken land through the Arctic night for no other purpose than to hunt, and when I explained to him that the hope of getting musk-ox trophies had been the chief reason for my stay he marked upon an old chart which I had, sections where he had encountered large herds of musk-oxen in his journey across Ellesmere Land, information which I later utilized.

Dr. Cook remained a few days at Annootok to recuperate, and then with Kulutinguah began his long sledging trip to the Danish settlement at Upernavik, where he hoped to connect with a steamer for civilization. I accompanied them to Etah. Here there was great excitement among the Eskimos when they learned of Dr. Cook's return. He remained two days at Etah and then with Kulutinguah left for the south.

During the previous autumn Captain Bernier of the Canadian steamship *Arctic* had left some supplies near Etah for Dr. Cook. The contents of the boxes were wrapped in New York and Washington newspapers, and although the news was several months old I seized upon the papers and read them eagerly.

The Eskimos had all gone to Nockme, and for several days I was entirely alone at Etah after Dr. Cook and Kulutinguah left me. I amused myself when in camp with culinary experiments and succeeded in making some excellent pop-overs and muffins, but an effort to makeingersnaps proved a dismal failure.

Finally, when hunting hares one day I espied two

sledges in the distance approaching from the southward. Hurrying back to camp I put over a kettle of corn-meal, and when the travelers, who proved to be Eiseeyou and Oxpuddyshou, arrived, had a good hot meal ready to welcome them. They brought the good news that in a day or two several others were to leave Nockme for the northward, prepared to enter upon the musk-ox hunt in Ellesmere Land. After the two men had rested a few hours we loaded our sledges and hurried on to Annootok in advance of the others that all might be in readiness for a prompt start across Smith Sound.

Two days later Annoploblakto arrived, announcing that the main body of Eskimos might be expected shortly, and when they arrived a day later, all was in readiness for the expedition. Several besides those whom I had engaged to form my party came, and it was a great spectacle to see them on the eve of our going, wrapped in deerskins and sleeping on their sledges in the open—Eiseeyou, the two Oxpuddyshous, Tukshu, Etukishuk, Ahwelah, Sipsu, Tungwe, Annoploblakto, Pierwater and Ouckmerdinguah were all here.







## XVII

### OFF TO ELLESMERE LAND

**T**HE weather was clear, beautiful, ideal, as we pulled out of Annootok at half-past two on the morning of May ninth, bound for Ellesmere Land and the musk-ox country. This trip was the one of all the hunting trips that I had looked forward to with high anticipation of reward. If my hopes were to be crowned with success I felt that I should be amply rewarded for all the hardship and discomfort experienced during the preceding months and the long night.

My expedition was composed of six sledges, each in charge of one Eskimo. Eiseyou was my head man, and with his komatik I traveled. The other sledges were in charge of Tukshu, Etukishuk, Ahwehlah, and the two Oxpuddyshous, all capable and active travelers and hunters. Several others, not attached to my party, accompanied us across Smith Sound, but there left us.

Our course was to the northward, that we might pass around an open lead some ten miles out on Smith Sound. The crisp Arctic atmosphere was brilliant and exhilarating, and for five miles the ice, smooth and perfect, enabled us to make rapid progress.

IN ELLESMERE LAND





Then we came upon rough rafted ice, and ice axes were brought into use to open a road. Dogs and komatiks became scattered in what seemed to me a hopeless effort to find a passage. But no situation is so hopeless and no physical obstacle so great that the resourceful Eskimo cannot overcome it.

Now and again, when the way was blocked, they climbed ice pinnacles to look ahead for possible routes, then returned to the task of cutting away obstructions, hauling, lifting, pulling at the traces to aid the willing dogs. It is little short of superhuman—the energy of these men. Six hours of toil and we found ourselves again on smooth ice. It was new ice, formed within the previous fortnight, and as polished and perfect as a field of glass. The dogs appreciated it as well as ourselves and forged ahead at a rapid pace.

Many seals were seen on this fresh-made ice, and Eiseeyou desired that I take charge of his team while he stalked some of them. Seals are extremely shy and great caution must be practiced in approaching them. The Eskimos use a blind in the form of a miniature sledge, about eighteen inches in length by six inches in width, with bearskin tacked on the runners. Fore and aft are two upright crotched sticks, upon which the rifle rests and to which it is lashed. On the front of the little sledge a cross-bar sustains two long perpendicular sticks, over which a piece of white cloth is stretched, or, when that is not obtainable, hareskin is substituted. Through a hole in this cloth screen the rifle muzzle protrudes.

Holding his blind before him Eiseeyou was enabled to walk within three or four hundred yards of a seal without startling it; then he dropped upon hands and knees and pushed the sledge-blind before him. Thus hidden behind the cloth screen, which so blended with the ice as to arouse in the seal no suspicion of danger, he approached within fifty yards before shooting. Seals always lie close to their holes, and it is necessary to hit them in the head, or under the shoulder and have the bullet penetrate the heart, and thus kill them instantly; otherwise they will flop into the hole and sink before it is possible to reach them.

The dogs are trained to lie down and remain quiet until the shot is fired. With quivering bodies and nerves tense for a run, they watch with the most acute anxiety every movement of their master. The instant the report of the rifle rings out they spring to their feet and dash forward with an impetuosity and eagerness that nothing can restrain.

Eiseeyou was successful, and in spite of anything I could do the dogs broke away in a wild dash to the slaughtered seal, and only the whip preserved the carcass from being torn to pieces on the spot. While I kept the animals in subjection, Eiseeyou cut a bowl-shaped hollow in the ice and into this bled the seal. Then the dogs were released to drink and feast upon the warm blood. This is their reward for patience and restraint while the master stalks his game, and only his own team is permitted to share in it.

In this manner Eiseeyou killed two very large seals. These were sufficient for immediate needs.

We lashed them upon the komatik with sealskin thongs, and without great delay resumed our journey toward Ellesmere Land.

For some distance our course followed a wide lead of open water, where could be seen numerous seals and white whales, with an occasional walrus, while overhead hovered large flocks of sea pigeons and small gulls.

Presently the dogs crossed a fresh bear-track and, wildly excited, took the scent and were off on a dead run after the quarry. We were as anxious as the dogs to catch the bear. Eiseeyou cut loose one of the seals to lighten his load, and for a time our speed over the smooth ice was terrific. But two other Eskimos, with larger teams of ten and eleven dogs each and lighter loads, soon outstripped us.

When the bear's tracks at length led into rough, hummocky ice, I advised Eiseeyou to abandon the chase and locate a suitable camping-place, for we had then been traveling twenty-one continuous hours and I was very much wearied and in need of rest and food. At this instant Oxpuddyshou, who had thrown off his load to lighten his sledge, flew past, and I shouted to him not to give up so long as there was hope of killing the bear and that I would give him plenty of tobacco for the skin.

A halt was at length made near an iceberg from which fresh-water ice could be cut for our kettle. Snow blocks were thrown up to form a wind-break, and in the lee of them I pitched my tent and set up the oil stoves that I might cook my own meal, and brew

## 278 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

a large kettle of hot tea for the Eskimos when they returned from the hunt, which they presently did, unsuccessful.

They were a hungry lot of hunters when they gathered around the dead seals to feed like animals upon the raw, bloody meat.

Finally, the dogs fed and taken care of, we turned into sleeping-bags for much needed rest. As we slept, a strong north wind sprang up, and when we rose to resume our journey we found it raw and piercing. But presently the weather moderated and snow began to fall heavily.

It will be remembered that we were still on the Smith Sound ice, heading for Ellesmere Land. We attempted to make land south of Victoria Head, but very rough, rafted ice repelled us, and the thick, falling snow shut out all view ahead. We were at length compelled to abandon our effort and go into camp again to await more favorable conditions.

The Eskimo divides his periods into "sleeps," but a sleep does not designate by any means the civilized measure of day and night. It is, in fact, a very uncertain term. Often we traveled from twenty to thirty hours without rest. Now there was no night, and I so far lost count of time that I was not at all certain of dates. Our single marches, with the succeeding "sleep," not infrequently covered a full forty-eight hours or two ordinary days. The object of these extended marches was to take advantage of good weather and general conditions, or because no safe or convenient camping-place presented itself in







IN ELLESMERE LAND; EISEEYOU FINDS WATER

the interim. Thus during the long night, when blizzards and gales were so prevalent, it was necessary to take advantage of every hour of moonlight or twilight, in lulls between the storms.

Oxpuddyshou and Etukishuk went ahead to survey the ice barricades. They climbed a high iceberg, from which a good view of our surroundings could be had, and returned with a most discouraging report. Personally I could see little hope of finding an opening through which to push our sledges.

This second march on Smith Sound was of eleven hours' duration, and with piercing wind and driving snow I suffered great discomfort. But a comfortable camp was the reward, tea and bacon for all hands warmed our blood and brought cheer and content, and our sleeping-bags were snug and cozy.

A few hours' rest, a breakfast of seal liver and seal flippers—very strong and fishy in flavor—and we were again ready to attack the problem of overcoming the ice barrier. Etukishuk, who was one of Cook's Eskimos and had also been on the Polar Sea with Peary, and Annoploblakto, who had been with the latter on one of his "Farthest North" expeditions, both asserted that they had never in their lives encountered anything more difficult.

We found but six miles through which we had to chop our way, but those six miles consumed thirteen hours of continuous effort. Snow-shoes could not be used in this rough stretch, though the snow was very deep in places, and now and again I sank to my waist.

## 282 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

At length, men exhausted and dogs so tired that they lay down in their traces and refused to be urged into further effort, wind blowing, snow drifting, and my face and feet benumbed with cold, we searched for a suitable snow-bank on which to build an igloo. Snow to be available for this purpose must be hard and firm, else blocks cannot be cut from it. Here it was all too loose, and as a last resource our bivouac was made in the lee of a convenient iceberg which broke the force of the bitter wind.

Though I wore dark glasses as a protection the white glare had seriously affected my eyes. They had a burning sensation and the eyeballs felt as though sand or some similar substance was imbedded in them—the warning of approaching snow-blindness.

In addition to this, with insufficient shelter from the north wind and consequent inability to protect myself from the cold, I was far from comfortable, but, the Eskimos consoled me with the statement that we had passed the roughest ice and that with a few more “sleeps” would find ourselves in the musk-ox country.

Nature asserted herself and my sleep was long and dreamless. When I awoke, much refreshed, the wind had died, the sky was cloudless, the sun was shining, and the day was the mildest of the year. The Eskimos had been up for several hours, but had not ventured to disturb me. It is characteristic of them that they will not awaken a slumbering white man save in case of urgent need.

The traveling was much improved, the drivers pushed the dogs as rapidly as possible, and progress was good. On an island that we passed I killed three Arctic hares with my .22 automatic rifle, and Oxpudyshou killed five, a welcome variety to our diet.

I shall never forget the feast that those Eskimos had when we next halted. I made a careful note of what the six men consumed within three hours—seven hares (these weigh from ten to fourteen pounds each before they are dressed); one seal; about a bucketful of dried walrus meat prepared by Dr. Cook for dog food while he was at Annootok; and two large cups of tea and four biscuits per man. A good part of the seal and all of the hare meat they ate raw, like hungry dogs. I trained my camera upon them, but these Eskimos had a decided objection to being photographed while they eat, and out of respect to their wishes I desisted.

The drivers had been urging their dogs forward with unusual speed, and now the reason developed. They were anxious to reach a cache made by Dr. Cook more than a year before when he crossed Ellesmere Land. Kulutinguah, who was with him at the time, had told my party that he believed some tobacco had been left in the cache and the desire to get this made them doubly anxious. We found the cache on the side of a steep hill with the cases containing the supplies covered with rocks. Camp was pitched a few hundred yards from land. I insisted that all should be made snug before the cache was opened, and every one worked with feverish haste. None

would touch the cache, let it be said, as anxious as they were to investigate its contents, without my consent to do so. Finally when everything was in order I gave the word, and the Eskimos rushed at it like crazy men.

It did not take them long to remove the rocks and tear the boxes open. There were four large tin boxes, containing one box of fine tea, one box of coffee, one box of sugar, five cans of cranberry sauce, twenty-four boxes of matches, a number of cakes of chocolate, two boxes of films for a small camera, six rolls of films which I found would fit my own camera and which I appropriated, one plane, one small knife, some .22 cartridges, which had gone bad, some rifle cartridges which were as good as ever, one large and one small fry pan, one large box of dried walrus and narwhal meat, and dog pemmican, customarily made by white men in the Arctic—but to the great disappointment of all, no tobacco.

Though the pemmican was intended for dogs, the Eskimos seemed to enjoy it immensely. Everything was carried down to camp, and there, in accordance with Dr. Cook's request, I divided between his two men, Etukishuk and Ahwelah, such things as I did not need myself.

Here in our camp near the cache we halted for seven hours. I slept poorly, weary as I was, and put in a miserable night, owing to the constant cracking of the ice, with loud reports, sometimes directly beneath us, when it would tremble and threaten to swallow us up. The Eskimos were all sleeping

soundly when I arose and got my oil stove going, but they were soon up, preparing the sledges for the advance.

Again we came upon open water and were compelled to turn a long distance out of our course to get around it. However, the ice was in the finest possible condition and we were able to cover in this march twenty miles by the chart, though we halted once to kill seals, a number of which were to be seen on the ice, as we needed them badly for dog food. I succeeded in getting two and the Eskimos brought in five.

At length we reached the head of Flagler Fjord and left the ice for the land. High winds had swept the rocks pretty clear of snow and traveling became, therefore, exceedingly bad. The country was very rough and we could see only a short distance ahead, but there seemed small prospect of improvement. There was so little snow, in fact, it soon became evident we should have to lighten our komatiks of every pound we could spare from our equipment, dispensing with everything not absolutely necessary to our existence, even at the expense of comparative comfort. A small amount of tea and sugar and twenty-five pounds of biscuits were retained. Among other things, my oil stoves and oil were cached, and beyond this point I used the Eskimos' stone lamps to do my cooking.

Here we encountered the hottest day of the season thus far experienced. The thermometer registered at one time fifty-eight degrees above zero,

though later, when in camp, as I wrote in my journal, I noticed that it had dropped to six degrees above. Traveling in this high temperature was exceedingly uncomfortable. Perspiration ran into my eyes, already inflamed by the glare of sun and snow, and they became very painful. Oxpuddyshou and Tukshu had delayed the use of smoked glasses too long, and were suffering a great deal of pain from snow blindness.

Hares were very plentiful in the valleys which we were ascending, and they were so tame that one could approach within a few yards of them. I shot several for food, though they were very poor. Then I photographed several groups of them, in some instances making the exposures at less than twenty feet.

While hunting hare with Etukishuk I came upon the heads of five large musk-oxen which had been killed a long time ago, and also saw a great many old musk-ox tracks. One pair of horns was in a fair state of preservation, and this I took with me, but the others had lain in the snow for so long they were valueless.

In spite of the many tracks that were seen here I held to my purpose to push on to the country for which we had set out. Here the tracks were not of recent date, while in the farther country there was no question but that we should find an abundance of game. In fact, Eiseeyou assured me that we were now so close to it that after another "sleep" or two at most we should have musk-oxen for dinner.







BUILDING A WIND-BREAK

The difficult conditions of traveling compelled us to shorten our next march to eight hours. Men and dogs were exhausted. Our eyes were bloodshot, highly inflamed and painful. The temperature had suddenly dropped, and when I attempted to sleep I suffered more from the cold than at any time since leaving Annootok. The moisture from our breath froze at once into crystals upon everything it touched.

The short marches, the necessity for halting to rest the dogs, and our own weariness brought about by constant back-breaking lifting of komatiks over rough, rocky places, made progress slower even than had been anticipated. But encouragement came in the increasing freshness of musk-ox signs, which gave promise that our ambition was soon to be realized.

Finally we turned into the bed of a very large river—a river when the weather was warm enough to make the water flow, but now a stretch of solid ice. I should say it was about a mile in width. On either side snow-covered mountains rose abruptly to lofty heights, with glaciers from the interior ice-cap now and again pushing down through ravines.

Everywhere we were surrounded by frozen desolation. It would be difficult to imagine a more God-forsaken region, but withal it possessed a rugged, austere beauty, an impressive and inspiring grandeur.

Here in the midst of this bleak, barren land came to me a day that shall remain a life memory—a day that brought full recompense for all the hardship and suffering that I had endured in the Arctic.



## XVIII

“OMINGMONG!” THE MUSK-OX!

WE had halted to make camp after many hours of tiresome toil, when Eiseeyou called me to him and pointing to what appeared to be two large rocks at the foot of a mountain, a half mile or so distant, said laconically, “Omingmong!” [musk-ox]. All of the Eskimos broke at once into an excited babble, and set to work with feverish haste to straighten out the dogs’ traces preparatory to a long run at high speed.

I could make little of what they said, for it requires, not one, but several years of constant residence among the Eskimos for a white man to obtain sufficient grasp of their language to understand a running conversation among themselves, and one must be an exceptional linguist indeed ever to be able to grasp their idioms. But when I saw them remove their guns from the cases, I knew they were preparing for the chase. This was to be *my* hunt. I had employed them with the distinct understanding that I was to do all musk-ox or bear shooting that took place on the trip, unless I chose to give them the privilege. My previous experiences had taught me that if I were to kill musk-ox or bear myself this

restriction was a highly necessary one. In running over their native hills and rocks no white man can hope to compete with them. Unless some such restriction were therefore placed upon them I knew full well that in their eagerness they would outstrip me in the chase, and I would arrive only to find all the animals killed and would be robbed of the satisfaction of securing with my own gun my own trophies. I did not propose to have this happen. I had come far and remained long in the Arctic for the purpose chiefly of personally securing musk-ox trophies, and did not intend at the last moment to be thwarted in my object. When I saw them getting their guns out, therefore, I told them very forcibly that I must hold them to their agreement, that I alone must shoot all the musk-oxen.

They were very sulky at first, but finally replaced their guns in the cases. In great haste and confusion everything was made ready. Three of the Eskimos cut one dog loose from each of their teams, and these dashed away on the trail of the musk-oxen, putting new life into those attached to the light sledges, though the snow was soft and deep. For a few hundred yards our speed was beyond belief. The dogs were wild for the hunt.

The three dogs that were first cut loose overtook the musk-oxen and attacked them by biting at their heels. When we had come within fifty yards of the animals, Eiseeyou cut his eight dogs loose, and the pack brought the game to bay. There was a large boulder rising above the snow and both musk-oxen

backed up against it and kept the dogs off with lowered heads and frequent charges, always backing to the boulder to protect their rear.

They were the first musk-oxen of my experience and they struck me as the most peculiar animals in appearance I had ever seen. Their long hair hung down and dragged in the snow, leaving a trail where they had walked on either side of their tracks. In color dark brown, with great shaggy, powerful heads armed with thick horns, close together at the top and curving low down on either side, heavy, curly mane, short legs—they had the appearance both of bison and mountain sheep, with some of the characteristics of each. For a little while I watched their method of fighting the dogs, then raised my rifle and gave each a shot behind the shoulder. I was very close to them when I fired and both animals were killed instantly.

I may say here that for either long or short range shooting, the high-power, small-bore, sporting rifle, carrying a good weight, soft-nosed, jacketed bullet, is, in my experience, the most effective and satisfactory weapon. I have done rapid shooting—always with killing effect—at many hundred yards with such a weapon, and when big game is vitally hit, it cannot escape.

The instant the musk-oxen dropped, all of the dogs were on top of them, and would have torn them to pieces had the Eskimos not driven them off with their whips. These were two very large old bulls, with magnificent heads, trophies alone worth all my hard trip from Greenland.

MUSK-OX AT HAY





Camp was made close by, and Eiseeyou, always with an eye for game, strolled off to the top of a small hill to look the country over with my glasses. In a few minutes he returned, much excited, to report two more bunches of musk-oxen. In one bunch he counted four, in the other there were many more, but owing to the fact that several of them were lying down, he could not tell the number. We talked the situation over, and decided to go for them at once. The two herds were not a great distance apart, and we decided that, with two Eskimos to assist me, I should attack the larger herd, while the other four Eskimos should follow the smaller one.

In an incredibly short time dogs were harnessed to the komatiks, and Eiseeyou, one other Eskimo and myself, with dogs at a run, were dashing toward the larger herd of musk-oxen, while the four remaining Eskimos and their dogs gave chase to the smaller herd. A few minutes earlier, tired and ravenously hungry after our strenuous day's work, luscious steaks and sleeping-bags tempted us. Now all weariness and hunger were forgotten.

As we neared the herd I could see several lying down. They had not yet discovered their danger, but almost immediately the other party began firing and in an instant the animals were on their feet and charging up the steep mountain-side. It is a trick of the musk-ox when pursued always to seek the highest available land. Eiseeyou cut all his dogs loose at once and we followed as rapidly as we could.

In all my experience I had never encountered a



rougher, more difficult country in which to hunt than this in Ellesmere Land. Ordinarily, I should have believed these mountain-sides, with walls of smooth rock sheathed with a crust of ice and hard snow, quite unscalable. In places they were almost perpendicular. Rarely did they offer a crevice to serve as foot or hand hold, and jutting points and firm-set boulders were too widely scattered to be of much help.

In his native land the Eskimo has a decided advantage over the white hunter. His life-time of experience has taught him to scale these ice-clad heights with a nimbleness and ease that are astounding. He is quite fearless, and even the mountain-sheep is not his superior as a climber. As if by magic, and with little apparent effort, the two Eskimos flew up the slippery walls, far outstripping me. How they did it I shall never know. Now and again I was forced to cut steps in the ice or I should inevitably have lost my footing and been hurled downward several hundred feet to the rocks beneath. I was astonished even at my own progress, and when I paused to glance behind me felt a momentary panic. But there was no turning back, and one look down robbed me of any desire to try it.

I had made but half the ascent, exhausted by the tremendous effort, when Eiseeyou, already at the top, was shouting to me, "Tieitie! Tieitie!" [Hurry up! Hurry up!] But I could not go faster. I was already doing my best and I called to him to try to keep the musk-oxen rounded up a little longer.

As I struggled toward the summit of the ridge



THE LARGEST TROPHY OF THE HUNT



I passed some dead and wounded calves that the dogs had overtaken and attacked. Short of breath, my nose bleeding from the effect of unusual exertion and high altitude, I finally turned a point of rock, and there, twenty yards away, thirteen noble musk-oxen were at bay. They stood tails together, heads down, in defensive formation. Whenever a dog approached too closely, one of them charged and immediately backed again into his place in the ranks.

While I recovered breath and composure of muscles, I studied their tactics and movements and made some camera exposures before beginning to shoot; but I could not delay long, for two of the over-venturesome young dogs had already been gored to death, another badly wounded, and all were in great danger from the sharp horns of the animals.

The round-up, though near the top of the ridge, was still in so steep a place that as my shots took effect and the animals fell, their bodies rolled down into the valley, hundreds of feet below, gaining great impetus before they reached the bottom. Thus seven of them were killed, when suddenly and without warning, as though by prearranged plan, the remaining six sprang from the ledge upon which they had made their stand and were off at a terrific rush along the glassy hillside. My footing was so insecure that it would have been foolhardy for me to have attempted to run.

I handed my rifle to the excited and anxious Eisee-you, and nimbly as a hare he was after them, keeping his equilibrium in a most marvelous and inexplicable

manner. Three of the dogs joined in the mad, reckless chase, but to my consternation the remainder of the pack turned down into the valley, and presently, powerless to prevent, I saw them tearing like hungry wolves at my hard-earned trophies, which had rolled to the rocks below.

There was nothing to do but follow Eiseeyou at the best speed I dared. Finally I overtook him, with the six musk-oxen again held at bay by the three faithful dogs. Eiseeyou, who had considerably withheld his fire, at once surrendered the rifle to me and as rapidly as possible I dispatched the remaining animals. One of them required three shots to drop him.

In this connection I may say that wounded musk-oxen display absolutely no signs of pain. I noted this remarkable fact on several occasions when I placed a ball near the front shoulder, and no indication was given by the animal that it was hurt until several minutes later it fell dead.

These last animals lodged where they fell and we set about skinning them immediately. Presently the Eskimos that had followed the smaller herd joined us. Among the six trophies secured on the hill were two fine bulls, remarkable specimens. But after a consultation among the men Eiseeyou informed me that we had made our killing in so inaccessible a position that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to get them out.

This was a keen disappointment and I insisted that in some way we must save the skins at least. Finally



DOGS HOLDING UP MUSK-OX



it was decided that this might be done if the heads were cut from the skins close to the body, and the heads abandoned; and to my intense gratification, though I regretted the loss of the fine heads, this was done. The Eskimos, of course, took good care that none of the flesh was wasted. They were extremely economical in this respect, especially so on this trip, as they were out for food for the following winter, as well as for sport.

The descent to the valley was even more difficult than the ascent had been. I found it a tedious and dangerous undertaking, and though I finally accomplished it without accident, I was much longer about it than the seemingly reckless Eskimos.

Here to my disappointment I found that nearly all the skins of the first animals killed were ruined. In rolling down the mountain-side large patches of hair had been torn out on sharp boulders, and the dogs had also wrought considerable destruction. However, I succeeded in saving one fairly good specimen complete, and with the other skins secured, felt well paid for my hunt.

Now came the reaction. Early in the chase I had found my kuletar an encumbrance and discarded it upon the hill-side. In the descent I had forgotten to recover it. Though the day was very cold the exertion and excitement threw me into a dripping perspiration. A keen north wind was blowing, and I soon began to shiver. To add to my discomfort, I had in the mountain-climbing severely bruised the soles of my feet on the rocks, and now I realized that



they were so tender that walking became extremely painful. However, there was nothing to do but recover the kuletar, and exercise was necessary to keep my blood in circulation until I secured its protection, which I finally did.

The experience of the other hunters was similar to ours. They had secured the smaller herd, but the animals were killed on a mountain-side, and two rolled to the bottom with more or less injury to the skins.

However, to my particular satisfaction, this party captured two calves alive. One of the objects of my adventure was to secure some live calves, in the hope that I might eventually succeed in bringing them home as a zoölogical contribution. With this in view I had taken upon the komatiks a good supply of condensed milk, as food for them, for I realized that any animals small enough to capture alive would still be suckling calves.

It was a tedious journey back to camp. For fifteen consecutive hours I had been exerting myself to the limit of my physical endurance, and during this period not a morsel of food had I taken. Let the hunter who passed through similar experiences picture, then, the satisfaction and anticipation with which I rested and watched a pot of musk-ox meat boil for supper, sniffing its appetizing odor.

Imagine my feeling when Eiseeyou, who was sitting near, sprang to his feet and began talking earnestly and excitedly to the others. He spoke so rapidly that I could make out but one word, Oming-mong! Omingmong means musk-ox, and when the



THE MUSK-OX. A FINE SPECIMEN



men began to get the dogs ready I knew that more game had been sighted. Eiseeyou endeavored to point the animals out to me—for musk-oxen, he said—on the opposite mountain-side, though with my naked eye I could see nothing of them. Finally, with the aid of glasses, I was just able to make them out near a point where the ice cap ran down in a glacier to the frozen river-bed.

“Will you go after them?” asked Eiseeyou.

I had come too far into that desolate country to permit mere physical weariness to dissuade me, so, reluctant as I was to leave the kettle of savory boiling meat and the inviting sleeping-bag, I answered “Yes.”

At the foot of the mountain twenty-one dogs were cut loose. They did not see the game until Tukshu, springing forward like a deer, led three of them to the trail above where the animals had turned. Here the three dogs took the scent and instantly the whole pack were behind them.

As on the former occasions the round-up was made at a high elevation. The Eskimos, far ahead of me, were shouting, “Hurry up! Hurry up!” long before I reached them, and urging me on. When I finally gained the mountain top I took a position at close range. One big fellow attracted me, and wishing to photograph him I gave my rifle to Tukshu, instructing him to kill the animal if it attempted an attack. Then I approached very near with my camera, to get as close a view as possible. At the instant that I made the exposure, less than a dozen feet away, the

infuriated bull broke from the ranks and with lowered head charged me. I had no further business in that immediate vicinity and proceeded to establish a sprinting record in the opposite direction.

While I am not an aspirant for athletic honors, many times since I have been sorry there was no one present with a stop watch to time that effort. Tukshu held his fire much longer than I thought necessary under the circumstances. Perhaps he was interested in my performance. Finally, however, he did fire, and the beast dropped at my heels.

Fortunately its body became wedged between two rocks, where it hung until we were able to prop it up. Thus all four of the musk-oxen were secured without damage to the skins, though it was with the utmost difficulty that we finally succeeded in getting the trophies into camp.

I was now so tired that even the kettle of meat had lost its attraction and I ate very little. I was too utterly weary, in fact, to remove my clothing before crawling into my sleeping-bag to rest. Once there, I told Eiseeyou that if he sighted any more musk-oxen he and the others could go for them if they chose, but as for myself, I intended to sleep, whatever else happened.

In the excitement of the chase I had taken off my dark glasses, and now felt the first pains of snow-blindness. Bruised feet, inflamed eyes, completely exhausted, I cannot remember that in all my life I ever experienced greater misery of body than at that moment. But after several hours of slumber, fol-





HAULING MUSK-OX TO CAMP

lowed by a delicious breakfast of musk-ox tongue and liver—musk-ox meat is the most toothsome meat I have ever eaten—I was quite myself again.

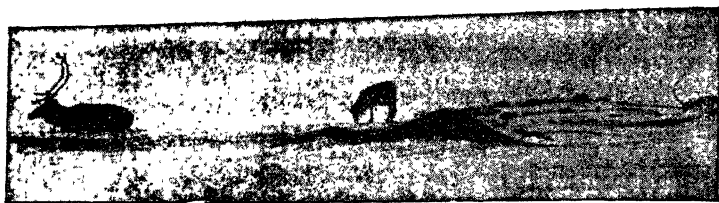
There was much to be done before continuing our hunt westward. Carcasses had to be hauled to camp, after giving the dogs all they wanted, trophies cleaned and made ready for transportation, and everything packed snug for our departure.

While the Eskimos were busied with these details I turned my attention to the numerous hare which were to be seen everywhere in the valley in groups of from twenty to fifty. They were thoroughly tame, doubtless because of the fact that they had never been hunted. Often I killed two with a single shot from my .22 automatic rifle.

My object was to secure skins for the Eskimo friends with whom I had spent the winter at Annootok and Etah, where hares are wild and difficult to get, and the people were badly in need of skins for socks. The pelts are very light and easily carried, and I felt I could do no less than take advantage of this opportunity to secure a stock of them to supply the demand.

When all the musk-oxen were finally hauled into camp, where the men could prepare them for transportation, I left two men to complete the work, and with four men and four sledges proceeded westward.





## XIX

### ON THE SMITH SOUND ICE

SOME ten miles west of our musk-ox camp we came to a high mountain. Here a halt was made to permit Eiseeyou to climb to the summit to view the country beyond through my glasses. Upon his return he reported that we were not far from the place where the western coast of Ellesmere Land drops down into the Frozen Ocean.

Eiseeyou could see no game, and in his judgment there was little prospect of finding musk-oxen in this vicinity, though he assured me that a journey of four "sleeps" to the northwest would carry us into a region where we should certainly find game in abundance.

Four "sleeps" indicated nothing. It might have meant two hundred miles, or it might have meant fifty miles. The Eskimo has no conception of distance. He is endowed with certain artistic instincts which enable him to draw a fairly accurate map of a coast line with which he is thoroughly familiar, but he cannot tell you, even approximately, how far it is from one point to another. Often when they told me a place we were bound for was very close at hand, it developed that we were far from it. This is some-



SKINNING THE MUSK-OX — THE SKINNING MUST BE DONE QUICKLY BEFORE THE CARCASS FREEZES



thing they are never sure of and cannot indicate.

Though some of the specimens secured were not so large as I might have wished, at least six were equal to any the Eskimos had ever seen, and I was, on the whole, well satisfied with the results of the hunt. We already had full loads for nearly all of the komatiks, and at most could not have carried more than four additional heads.

In view of these circumstances, I gave the word to return to camp, where we arrived after a tiresome march in the teeth of a keen northwest wind, and began at once to prepare for our retreat.

Since leaving Annootok I had not touched water to face or hands, and was as dirty as the dirtiest Eskimo. As a matter of fact their hands were much cleaner than mine, for they had a habit of rubbing and cleaning them now and again with snow, a thing that I never attempted. The prospect of a bath when we should reach Annootok was therefore a pleasant thought.

The young musk-oxen were doing well, and I had high hopes of success in getting them out. At first they were very troublesome to feed. They had not been educated to a condensed milk diet, and until hunger drove them to it, I had difficulty in inducing them to accept it; but in a remarkably short time they learned to like and look for it, and became quite tame and contented. A constant guard had to be kept over them, too, lest the ever watchful and blood-thirsty dogs attack and kill them, and this was no small part of the care they imposed upon us.

Though the sky was overcast, the glare was awful. Our eyes were inflamed, and the Eskimos as well as myself suffered much pain and inconvenience from this cause—they, perhaps, more than I.

But there was no time for rest. My calculations placed us nearly one hundred and fifty miles from Annotok by the only feasible route. A cloudy sky and shifting wind foretold a storm, and should snow come the difficulties of travel would be vastly increased. As quickly as possible, therefore, everything was made ready for the komatiks.

Now for the first time I realized how vast was the mass of trophies and meat that awaited transportation, in addition to our camping paraphernalia. It was no small problem to load the komatiks, and it soon developed that all could not be accommodated. The Eskimos wished to abandon some of the skins and heads, that no meat might be left behind; but I insisted that every trophy be taken, and a cache made of the surplus meat. The Eskimos could return for the meat at some future convenient time, while I should have no opportunity to recover trophies should they be cached. The country to be traversed was exceedingly rough, which demanded comparatively light loads, with every unnecessary pound eliminated. Therefore to lighten the komatiks further, I left with the meat cache one box of biscuits, one small bag of corn-meal, four cans of baked beans, and all the grass we had brought for our boots which we believed we should not need. [This grass is worn in the boots to absorb moisture



ROUGH ICE; SMITH SOUND



from perspiration. Otherwise the moisture will freeze, with frost-bitten feet as a result.

The temperature at this time was a few degrees above zero. All the skins were frozen stiff as boards, and though, while yet unfrozen they had been folded into shape to fit upon the komatiks, they were nevertheless unwieldy in this frozen condition, which increased the difficulty of packing the loads closely and snugly, a detail I left to the ingenious Eskimos. The tent and other belongings of my own I attended to personally. While the Eskimo will do everything possible for the white traveler's comfort, one thing my experience taught me he will not do: he will not interfere with his guest's personal belongings. One must collect these things one's self, and put them in shape for proper loading, otherwise they will be left behind.

We began our retreat with a strong northeast wind blowing, and increasing indications of snow. Tukshu's team had been reduced to six dogs through casualties in the hunt, which threw upon him much hard shoving and hauling of the heavily loaded sledge. One of his dogs—a very fine animal, badly wounded but still living—he attempted to carry on the komatik in the hope that it might recover, but the poor beast died soon after our start. I called a halt that the dog's pelt might be removed. Here I learned that the Eskimos have a superstition against skinning a dog whose death has been caused by another animal, and there was much discussion before they consented to do it.



A tragedy was the result of our stop. One of the musk-ox calves wandered into a bunch of dogs, and before I realized its danger was so badly bitten we found it necessary to kill it. The other calf followed us like a dog for ten hours. Her mother's skin was lashed upon one of the sledges. She had snuffed it, and this was what drew her on. Finally she became so tired that in descending a slippery ice grade she was unable to keep our pace, and I took her in my arms and carried her until we made camp. Then I warmed some condensed milk as quickly as possible, and, very hungry, she drank her fill and appeared contented. From this on I carried her, for the most part, in my arms. The Eskimos wished to kill her, as she was a great incumbrance, but I would not listen to it, and she soon learned to look to me for protection.

When we reached the head of Flagler Bay, where we had left our cache, with my oil stove on the outward journey, I was about "all in." I did not even attempt to cook, but ate some frozen raw musk-ox meat, and then crawled into my sleeping-bag to rest so well that when I awoke I found the Eskimos had already packed the sledges and were waiting for me with my breakfast cooked and tea made.

On the second day after reaching our cache one of the Eskimos in the lead pointed to the side of a high mountain, and presently I made out two Eskimos. They were of the party that accompanied us across Smith Sound and later I learned they had made camp some twelve miles from where we discov-



EISEEYOU AND THE AUTHOR WITH BABY MUSK-OX IN HIS ARMS



ered them. They had met with good luck, killing sixteen musk-oxen, four very large ones.

Several "sleeps" took us back to Cape Albert, and presently into the rough ice, which we found even worse than on our outward journey. Two sledges were broken, and five hours lost in making repairs. Roads had to be opened with axes, always tedious work. To me, with my little charge in my arms, it was particularly trying. When at last smooth ice was again reached, a gale arose and I began to fear lest the pack should break up.

We were a little less than half way across Smith Sound when this fear was realized. The Eskimos suddenly became much excited and I quickly discovered the cause. The floe we were on had separated from the main ice. The drivers whipped up their dogs, shouting at them and urging them toward a narrow lead, where as yet but two feet of water separated our young ice floe from the stationary ice. Fortunately we reached it in time—but only just in time—to make our escape over the already widening lead without accident.

Beyond this the traveling was fearfully rough. Soon snow began to fall, and in a little while a terrific blizzard was raging. It was so thick one could not see objects twenty feet away. An attempt was made to construct an igloo, but the snow was too soft, and we gave up the effort.

There was nothing to do but make the best of it. I pitched my tent, but it was poor protection from gale and searching snow. Musk-ox skins were

spread about to keep out the wind, and here we slept until the storm abated and weather enabled us to continue our journey.

When we resumed our march the glare was terrible. I no longer removed my glasses when I slept, for without them the intense light penetrated through the lids and burned the eyeballs. Three of the Eskimos became snow-blind, and as temporary relief I dropped a solution of cocaine into their eyes.

Presently we missed one of the sledges, and I turned back to search for it. I found the driver lying face down across his komatik, unable to open his eyes. He had abandoned himself to his suffering, in reckless disregard of whatever other fate might befall him, while the dogs, unnoticed, stood about with tangled traces.

Traveling grew steadily worse, and six miles from Annotok the ice-barrier became practically impassable, with here and there open leads of water extending northward. Five hours were consumed in opening a road and working around leads; then half our load was abandoned, and for several hours we labored through that six miles of ice. The efforts of the Eskimos were little short of superhuman. Finally the obstacle was overcome, and we found ourselves safely and thankfully back at Annotok.

Two of the Eskimos were so badly affected with snow-blindness they could not open their eyes and at once threw themselves face down upon their komatiks for several hours' sleep. But the other tireless men at once returned for the abandoned goods, while I

devoted myself to making the little musk-ox comfortable. The hard traveling, the storm, and the unnatural conditions had worn upon her. She was very weak and quite ill. I built a box house shelter for her, wrapped her in a blanket, and did everything in my power to save her, but later the poor little thing died. During the great number of miles I had carried her in my arms we had become greatly attached to each other and her loss grieved me more than I can say.

After an absence of six hours the komatiks returned with the abandoned trophies. Unfortunately the tips of some of the horns had been cracked by coming in contact with rough ice. The skins were wet, and before permitting myself any rest I spread them out to dry in one of the stone igloos.

Sipsu and Pierwater, who had gone north in search of bear, had been back five days when we reached Annootok. The bear hunt proved a failure, but turning up one of the bays north of Victoria Head, they killed nine musk-oxen, all of which had good heads. Pierwater had brought back a live musk-ox calf. It was much larger and stronger than mine, and as he captured it not over forty miles distant, it had a comparatively short and easy journey, and was in very good condition and health.

All the women had left Annootok. I desired their assistance in cleaning and preserving the skins. It was necessary this be done at once, for they were now thawed, very wet, and in danger of spoiling. Therefore I deemed it wise to move to Etah with my

trophies immediately, and arranged with the Eskimos that as soon as men and dogs were rested, we should turn southward. Accordingly, with only a few hours' delay, sledges were loaded, dogs harnessed, and we were off.

How different a journey this was from those tedious ones over the same course during the dark period, when we were beset by gale and blizzard and bitter, life-sapping cold, with hardships innumerable. Now the Arctic spring was at hand. Ice was breaking up, snow was rapidly disappearing, and many streams of water were pouring down the hillsides.

Large numbers of little auks were everywhere, ducks dotted the water, while snow-bunting and a sweet singing sparrow abounded on land, and clouds of gulls hovered over Littleton Island. It was glorious to see this returning life! It was a connecting link with the great outside world. It broke the silence that had brooded over the dead world for so long, and it brought joy and lightness to our hearts. Fourteen hours were consumed in making the journey, but every hour was filled with interest.

Upon arriving at Etah I found that the Eskimos had moved into the *tupeks*<sup>1</sup> and abandoned the igloos. The majority of the people were still at Nockme and other points farther south, hunting walrus and seals. Tongwe and her mother were here and they set to work at once upon my musk-ox trophies, which I placed in one of the deserted stone igloos out of reach of the sun's rays, where I hoped that by careful

<sup>1</sup> Skin tents.



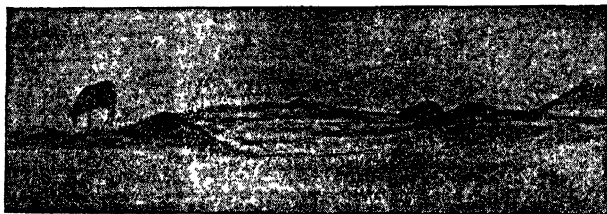
GOING SNOW-BLIND

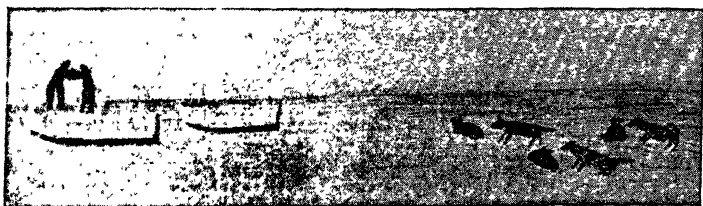




watching they might be preserved in good condition until the women had them properly scraped and cured.

All of my drivers prepared to leave at once for Nockme. A heavy, wet snow began to fall, and everything in and out of camp was wet. The men assisted me in getting my things packed away as snugly as possible. Then I boiled them a good meal of musk-ox meat, made tea for them, gave them tea, sugar and biscuit for their journey, and they said good-by.





## XX

### THE SPRING AWAKENING

**T**HE smaller of the musk-ox skins were without heads, and these the women cleaned very quickly, and then pegged out, fur side down, where it was intended they should remain exposed to the sun until perfectly dry. Some of the skins were thus exposed when snow began falling in large soft flakes which melted as soon as they touched the earth. I covered the skins at once with everything waterproof I could find, for green skins will be very quickly ruined by exposure to water, particularly if permitted to remain damp for any length of time. How to keep them dry until properly cured I realized was a serious problem under existing weather conditions. The stone igloos, the tupeks in which the people lived, the shack and everything around Etah dripped with moisture. A small stream of water ran under my bunk in the shack into a hole dug in the middle of the floor, from which it was necessary to bale the water at frequent intervals.

Late in the afternoon after my arrival I visited the igloos and tupeks and found the skins all in a nasty wet mess, and so heavy with water I could scarcely lift one. Tongwe told me there was nothing

that could be done with them, however, while the wet weather continued, and that all attempts to clean them then were quite useless. I therefore decided to salt them, unless the weather cleared within a day or two, as there seemed no other way to preserve them.

The tupeks were in a terrible condition, and I carried one of my oil stoves over to Tongwe that she might endeavor with its heat to dry her tupek out. How people can exist for long under these conditions and avoid attacks of rheumatism or pneumonia I cannot understand. Certainly people in a civilized country cannot long escape illness who live in surroundings much less unsanitary.

An amusing incident occurred at this time indicative of the resourcefulness of the Eskimos. Ilabrado's kooner was visiting at one of the other tupeks, when her children set up a cry which took her back to her own tupek on a run. Presently I learned the cause of the commotion. Upon my arrival at Etah I had presented each of the Eskimo women with some musk-ox meat and fat and one of Ilabrado's dogs—a fine big fellow—had raided her tupek in the kooner's absence and devoured the greater part of her share. The children entering in time to catch the dog in the act, raised the alarm. These food delicacies the kooner had no intention of losing. By way of punishment to this particular dog, and as an example to the canine population of Etah in general, she beat the animal soundly with a barrel stave, first securing him with a rope tied in a slip knot around his neck. Then it was that, the dog taught his lesson

not to steal again, the other dogs duly warned against it by example, and her duty fully performed in these respects, the kooner displayed her resourcefulness. She passed the free end of the rope over a ridge-pole of the tupek, and drew up upon it until the dog at the other end could barely touch his hind feet to the ground. Then she tied the rope and walked away, leaving the animal suspended.

"What are you going to do?" I asked.

"Get the meat," she answered laconically.

When, ten minutes later, she returned, the dog was dead. She lowered the carcass, dragged it out upon the ice, cut it open, and removed the much chewed fat and meat which the dog had swallowed. While she was engaged in this, the children brought her pails of sea water, in which the recovered delicacies were placed, and washed piece by piece. Thus recovered and cleansed, she displayed them to me with much pride, remarking, "Just as good as ever!"

Fortunately the weather cleared after a couple of days, and the sun came out bright and hot, with so terrible a glare that I found it necessary to wear smoked glasses continually, and even then my eyes burned and troubled me a great deal.

During this clear fine weather the women worked on my trophies, though it was found a slow and tedious job removing the skin from heads. However, progress was satisfactory, and I was greatly relieved, for I had feared that some of them might be ruined.

Never in my life had I seen so much bird life as abounded here. Little auks covered the cliffs, not

in thousands, but in millions. The Eskimos prize them as a food delicacy, and utilize their skins for shirts. They are wonderfully dexterous in skinning them. This is done by loosening the skin around the neck, and stripping it off, by pulling the body through the neck, without cutting the skin. All the fat is then peeled off by putting the skin in the mouth, after which the skins are fastened on strings stretched across the tupek, until thoroughly dried, when they are made as soft and pliable as kid gloves, by chewing.

Several of the men were preparing to net the birds<sup>1</sup> and I joined the party. The net used is similar to a crab-net, but very shallow and much larger. It is made of sealskin, cut into small cords with the hair scraped off, and woven into a narrow mesh. The ends of the nets are lashed to poles about twelve feet in length, by which they are carried by the hunters.

The birds seemed to have no fear of us whatever, and as we ascended a hillside they flew over and around us in thousands, skimming along like autumn leaves carried before a heavy breeze. When the net was held perpendicularly they flew into it, their heads becoming entangled in the mesh, much in the manner in which fish are gilled. In three hours Oxpuddyshou and myself captured considerably more than a large sack full. Oxpuddyshou dexterously locked the wings of those that we could not get into the sack in such a manner that they hung together as though tied on a string, and were thus easily slung over the back and carried to camp. I counted the

### 334 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

catch and found that we had secured three hundred and twenty-five. The little auk is an excellent food bird, its flesh resembling in texture and flavor the English snipe.

While in the rookery on the mountain-side I became weary, and sat for a little while near a large rock, remaining very quiet. In a few moments several of the beautiful little birds alighted upon my head and shoulders.

Every day some fresh species of bird appeared. On June the ninth I saw the first large flock of eider ducks that I had observed, and others came in great numbers, until our whole Arctic wilderness was alive with the new life of spring.

It will be remembered that this was the period of perpetual day. Above us the sun made a small circle, remaining boldly in view in the high heavens throughout the twenty-four hours. Sleep seemed less necessary than during the dark period, and I found that comparatively little satisfied the demands of nature.

It was as difficult to keep account of time now as it had been during continuous night, and I was by no means certain that my reckoning of dates was correct. On the ninth of June, according to this reckoning, the temperature reached eighty-six degrees, with the thermometer exposed to the direct rays of the sun. This was very warm indeed as contrasted with that recently experienced. Water rushed in great streams down mountain-sides, rapidly and visibly the snow was disappearing from the land,

and the ice in the sound was breaking up and moving seaward with every tide.

Early on the morning of June tenth I was awakened from sound sleep by a rap on the door. Opening, I found Kulutinguah, just returned from his journey south with Dr. Cook. He reported an exceedingly hard trip in both directions, encountering heavy snow below Cape York. I was glad to see him, and particularly so because he brought me twenty-five pounds of tobacco, an especial luxury now, for I had been without any of the weed for several months.

During the day five Eskimos with their families arrived from Nockme. Their sledges were heavily laden with tupeks and all of the owners' belongings, and their coming and camp making resembled the arrival of an old-time circus in a country town. They included Sipsu and his family, six in all; Pierwater, four in all; Tukshu, two; Abidinguah, four; with innumerable dogs, which at once set up a pandemonium of howling and fighting. The new arrivals pitched their tupeks close to my camp, and with this large increase in the canine population, to say nothing of the people who would be constantly in and out of camp, particularly Sipsu and Tukshu, always noisy, I realized that future rest and sleep was to be uncertain. The Eskimos themselves seemed never to sleep at all. As a further disturbing element they announced that three more families might be expected up from Nockme in a day or so.



The first of the Arctic flowers were now blossoming. A plant which had come up within two days burst into bloom, with a small purple flower resembling Scotch heather. A hill directly back of camp was covered with it, and it was beautiful indeed. Other wild flowers in great variety, habitants of the region, were now to be expected, and I eagerly watched for them, tramping out over the hills to gather them as they appeared, for a collection which I was making and which I preserved by pressing and drying.

I observed that for twenty-four hours the little auks had left the hill-side to feed in the open waters of the bay; suddenly they began to rise, millions upon millions of them, to return again to the rookeries on the hills. For five hours clouds of them were passing up from the water to the breeding grounds. It was a marvelous display of bird life, and one that can be seen nowhere else in the world.

Shortly after the flight of the little auks ceased the sky became obscured by clouds, and in a very short while a fierce blizzard was raging. The snow was wet and did not drift, but walking far in it was out of the question, and every one kept pretty close to cover. I filled in the time with a visit to Sipsu's tupek, not far away, which was warm and comfortable, though the floor was covered with bloody seal meat and blubber, and several hundred little auk skins were suspended from the top to dry. Presently I returned to camp to try my hand at making doughnuts. My efforts produced an article that looked





LITTLE AUKS

like the real thing, and tasted very well, though heavy as lead, and resulted in a bad case of indigestion.

The storm blew over after a couple of days, and the sun broke out again warm and bright, melting the snow on the hills in streams which poured down to the sea in sparkling silver threads, and loosened rocks and earth, causing frequent landslides. Often we were startled by the thunderous roar of debris torn loose from the mountain-sides and leaving great patches and wide paths of bared earth to mark the course of a slide.

The shack was so very wet and uncomfortable that even the Eskimos now warned me against remaining in it as unhealthful. I therefore pitched my tent on a dry spot a short distance from it, where I took up my sleeping quarters. This proved a very great improvement over the gloomy shack.

The Eskimos were incessantly hunting. Some of them came in nearly every day with great sacks of little auks. I saw Oxpuddyshou and Kulutinguah return at one time with five large sacks filled with the birds. This was the harvest-time—the time of plenty. Sea and land were teeming with live things. One day Tukshu asked me to go in a dory with some of them duck shooting. The other members of the party were Abidinguah, Ilabrado and Etukishuk. I took with me twenty-five cartridges and killed fifteen eider ducks and two looms.

The Eskimos had provided themselves with harpoon and lances in the hope of killing walrus, and while we were working to the southward through

heavy pans of ice they all suddenly stood up in the boat, very much excited, pointing toward three black objects some distance away, which they told me were walrus.

I took an oar, Tukshu with harpoon poised planted himself in the bow, while Ilabrado steered, and we headed for the game. But while rounding an iceberg in our course we unexpectedly came close upon three other very large walrus sleeping upon the ice, and in a twinkling, before the animals awoke, Tukshu had his harpoon in a big old bull—the biggest of the three. The other two took to the water, and we sprang from the boat upon the pan, where the harpoon line was made fast. The walrus put up a hard fight, towing the pan upon which we were stationed a considerable distance. I wished to shoot, but the others warned me not to do so for fear the report of the rifle might frighten the other walrus, still sleeping on a small pan some distance away.

After a half hour's hard fight the game was drawn close enough to the pan to permit lancing. Walrus are very full-blooded animals, and every time the lance was thrust into it great streams of blood gushed out, until all the water around was red. When finally killed the body was warped upon the ice, and very quickly cut into large pieces ready for loading into the boat. I never ceased to marvel at the dexterity with which the Eskimos—usually two of them—with an improvised pulley drew large carcasses, weighing often, as this one did, fully two thousand pounds, out of the water.

The meat stowed in the boat, we turned our attention to the three sleeping walrus originally seen, and in a short time one of them, a cow, and much smaller than the other one captured, was killed on the ice.

Now I learned a new way of melting snow for drinking water. Before dissecting the carcass, the Eskimos cut through the skin and thick coating of fat, and drew out the stomach, which I noticed they were very careful not to puncture. Then the cavity from which the stomach had been removed was filled with snow, which was quickly melted by animal heat. The Eskimos threw themselves on the body, thrust their heads inside, and drank the snow water with great relish. I was very thirsty and also quenched my thirst with it, but it was greasy and fishy and left a disagreeable, oily taste in the mouth.

Walrus feed on a shell-fish very like our salt water clams. The stomachs of both of the walrus captured were filled with these, and they were very carefully removed by the Eskimos, who consider them a great delicacy, and with great gusto and relish the three feasted upon them. Without washing them, they took the little shell-fish up in handfuls, crowding them into their mouths, and consuming great quantities. I was very hungry myself, for we had been out now many hours, and attempted to eat some of the clams, but my stomach rebelled and I was almost made sick by the strong smell and the fact that the boat and everything around us was covered with thick, dark-colored blood.

A white man should never go hunting with Eski-

## 342 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

mos without an ample provision of food. If they are successful in killing game they satisfy their appetite by eating it uncooked, and if they become weary they lie down upon snow or rocks and sleep as soundly as in tupek or igloo, conditions a white man cannot accustom himself to readily.

Many walrus were now to be seen upon the surrounding ice, but the flesh already obtained was so heavy it all but swamped our boat, and no further hunting was indulged in, though I had difficulty in dissuading Tukshu and Abidinguah from pursuing two seals which were sighted.

I also had much difficulty in persuading the men to return to camp. Having dined well they were in no haste. They did not care whether they returned at once or several days later, and were quite content to lounge about upon the ice. Eskimos are peculiar in this respect. During the long night they are constantly active, and in the summer season, when hunting or traveling, they will work hard and tirelessly until their mission is accomplished. Then they relax at once into indolence, feasting and gorging upon the plenty that surrounds them.

I was very tired, sleepy and hungry. I had not so far learned to adapt myself to the Eskimo mode of life that I could rest properly as they did or to eat uncooked flesh and enjoy it. After much urging I at length succeeded in getting them to move, when the sky began to thicken and black clouds appeared in the north, by warning them that our boat

was so heavily laden it would be swamped were a heavy sea to overtake us.

Several hours of hard pulling took us at length to land, where the dogs had been picketed, and I left the others to unload the boat and put the meat upon the sledge while I walked back to camp, where I arrived after nearly twenty hours' absence.

When I arose after a good, restful sleep a strong north wind was blowing, accompanied by flurries of snow. I remained in camp the greater part of the day and was preparing for bed again when two excited piccaninnies rushed in to tell me that Portloona and Pennipar, two Eskimos who had been with Peary, had arrived from Cape Sheridan. They had left the Roosevelt on April third—this was June twenty-second—and had reached us after a hard, adventurous journey. They brought me a letter from McMillan, in which he reported all well, and that up to the date of the departure of the Eskimos a pleasant winter had been passed.

The two travelers told of large numbers of seals seen upon the ice north of Annootok, and several of the Eskimos prepared to leave for Annootok to hunt them as soon as weather conditions were favorable for the passage north. My trophies were all cleaned, though not thoroughly dry, and I felt that they were now in such condition that I could safely leave them in charge of the women. I therefore decided to accompany the party in the hope of a narwhal hunt. Kulutinguah had previously advised me that the best



narwhal region was in the vicinity of Annootok, and I particularly desired to secure some good specimens.

From a hilltop I could see the harbor ice breaking up and rafting, a great number of icebergs drifting close to land, and with a heavy swell and high wind, white spray could be seen shooting high in the air in all directions. The Eskimos were all ready to leave for Annootok, but in answer to my question when they would start, answered, "Witchow, witchow, trongie, anor." [By and by, no wind.]

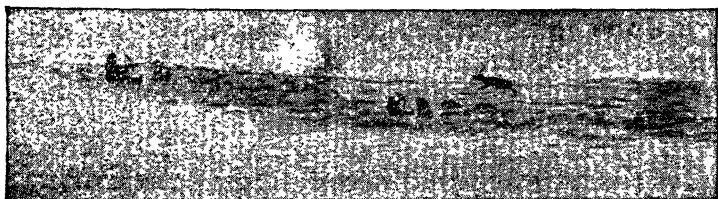
I was to accompany Abidinguah north, and in the interim, while we were waiting for the wind to subside, asked him to go trout fishing with me to a small pond, some distance up the bay, at the foot of Brother John's Glacier. Here I caught five fine large fellows, the largest of which I should say weighed six pounds. I not only enjoyed the sport but upon return to camp fried trout proved a luxurious addition to the camp menu.

The glacier above the pond where we fished had begun to move. On its west side was a hill, some thirty feet in height, of gravel and rock deposit. Every few minutes the glacier gave forth a loud noise, and following the noise great masses of stones and dirt loosened by the glacier's movement were dislodged from the hill, to roll down its steep side. As we were about to leave, a thunderous report was heard beginning far back over the glacier, and approaching with a long, rolling sound until it appeared quite near, when it died away. This, Abidinguah told me, was the opening of a crack, or crevasse.

These displays of nature's forces were awe-inspiring always. I never ceased to wonder particularly at the mighty power of the glaciers, ever steadily pushing their way down to the sea and carrying before them great masses of earth and rock and all things that stand in their path.

When I arose after a few hours' sleep, I found the weather propitious for traveling. Nearly all the Eskimos were busily engaged in netting little auks, and had decided not to go northward until they had made a sufficient catch to provide for future needs, as none, they told me, were to be had at Annootok. Abidinguah, however, was prepared to leave at once, and without waiting for the others we packed our sledge and turned toward Annootok.





## XXI

### HUNTING THE NARWHAL

**T**HE ice-foot around Cape Ohlsen was gone and this forced us to cross the steep mountain behind Etah on an overland route. For the first quarter-mile, upon turning from the bay, the earth was entirely bare of snow and the dogs were unable to haul the loaded sledge over this space. We were therefore compelled to carry the goods on our backs up the steep bare slope to a point where snow still remained. I had carried two back loads up, and was pretty nearly exhausted with the effort, when old Ilabrado, who could see us from his tupek at Etah, came to my assistance and helped me with the balance. Abidinguah had all he could do to get the empty sledge to the top of the steep hill, pulling with the dogs over bare rocks.

Beyond the carry the snow was deep and soft, and I recall this trip to Annootok as one of the hardest of my experiences, from the point of physical exertion. Dogs floundered and komatik sank deep in snow. Unfortunately I had not taken snow-shoes with me and at no time had felt greater need of them. Sometimes we dropped to our waists in softened drifts and always nearly to our knees.

SPANNING A LEAD WITH DOG-SLED





With a light crust over the snow to make it worse, the labor of walking and the necessity of frequently helping the dogs was exhausting.

After crossing two mountains, however, we found the ice-foot intact for a few miles, and where this was the case traveling was fairly good. Now and again we halted to smoke and let the dogs get their wind; and while resting thus on the ice-foot, which skirted open water, immense flocks of thousands upon thousands of ducks proved a continual source of interest; and once I saw a flock of brants, the first I had observed.

Annotok was a sea of slush and slop. Two streams of water flowed through our shack and the place smelled very strong and unwholesome. The ground was still frozen too hard to turn the water aside by digging drains, and the conditions had to be endured. I carried flat stones in and placed them around the floor to step upon, or I should have been ankle deep in water.

We were joined at Annotok by Pennipar. No narwhals were to be seen, and Abidinguah and Pennipar, therefore, planned a week's seal hunting to the northward. I decided to join them, and after a day's rest we left Annotok for the north, traveling for a little way on the ice-foot.

In the vicinity of Annotok and northward the sea was still frozen, and everywhere the distant expanse of ice was dotted with seals basking in the sun near their holes. Numerous as they were, they were exceedingly shy and difficult to approach. Following

the ice-foot for a short distance we turned out upon the frozen sea and, when a few miles were behind us, halted for Abidinguah to arrange his little sledge, which he used as a blind. Under cover of this, and with much crawling and manœuvering, he and Pennipar each succeeded in killing two seals. I took three long shots, and though I hit all the seals, killed but one of them, which we secured; the other two, wounded, escaped in their holes. I believed when I fired upon the one I killed that the animal was not over sixty or seventy yards away, but upon pacing the distance off afterward found it to be one hundred and twenty yards, so deceptive are distances on the ice.

The snow was damp and slushy and it was very wet work. One has to approach seals with great caution, crawling forward on hands and knees, or prone upon the stomach, and I was pretty thoroughly soaked when the hunt was over. A brisk wind sprang up from the north'ard, and a severe chilling followed as a natural result.

We were a long way from land, and upon our return encountered a lead of open water some sixty feet in breadth, necessitating a long detour. In many places the snow was deep, but I had taken the precaution to provide myself with snow-shoes at Annotok, which relieved the labor considerably. The lead at length narrowed down until finally we were able to bridge it with a sledge. Here, after crossing, I remained alone for several hours with one team of dogs and komatik, while the two Eskimos with the

other team made a further attempt to secure seals. When they returned, however, they had been unsuccessful, though they had wounded three which escaped into their holes before the hunters could get them.

Late in the evening, near Cape Leiper, a wind-break was improvised and we bivouacked. I had no sleeping-bag with me, and wet as I was and chilled through, could rest with no degree of comfort. The Eskimos were uncertain how long they would remain here and to the northward, as they desired to secure as many seals as possible before returning to camp. To me there was little sport in seal-hunting, and, all things considered, I decided to walk back to Annootok and wait there until an opportunity offered to hunt narwhals.

Accordingly, after a five hours' rest and a good meal of bacon and tea, I cached my things, covering them with rocks and snow, said adieu to Abidinguah and Pennipar, who turned in a northwesterly direction, and faced about on the trail.

In a straight line Annootok lay about fifteen miles below me. I followed our sledge tracks, presently coming upon good, smooth ice, covered with deep, soft snow, and donning snow-shoes pushed forward at a good pace until I reached the lead of open water which we had crossed the previous day. To my chagrin the lead was now so wide that I was compelled to make a circuit of several weary miles before an available crossing-place was found. The greater



part of this was over rough ice, where walking was of the hardest imaginable character.

Even though I had done a great deal of walking while in the North, it had generally been without snow-shoes, for during the winter season snow is usually hard enough to bear one, and I was therefore not sufficiently accustomed to their use to wear them on a long distance tramp without discomfort. In addition to this the snow had a light crust, through which I broke, and the undercrust was wet and soggy. These were anything but favorable conditions for snow-shoeing. My ankles and insteps became so lame and sore that I was forced down to a very slow pace. Then to add to the discomfort a strong wind sprang up, against which I was at times scarce able to keep my feet. At length I became so weary that now and again I would take my snow-shoes off, lie down upon them for a short rest, and then make a fresh start. How many hours or miles I traveled I do not know. The wide detours from a direct course, which I was forced continually to make, doubled or tripled the distance, and sometimes it seemed as though I should never reach my destination.

When at last I came to the ice-foot three miles north of Annootok, tide was at ebb, the ice-foot, which it was necessary to climb, towered high above me, and a wide crack in the sea-ice below separated me from it. This drove me through a lot of rough rafted ice, before at length I attained it, and when I finally reached the shack I was so exhausted that





THE FIRST NARWHAL OF THE SEASON, KILLED BY KULUNGUAH, WHO IS INDICATED BY THE ARROW

I threw myself upon my bed, without removing clothes or boots, to sleep until Billy roused me several hours later to join him at a good breakfast. After eating I crawled into my sleeping-bag again and there remained until thoroughly rested. When I arose my throat was sore, my back ached, and I found myself suffering with a cold as a result of my experience.

Several of the Eskimos had arrived at Annootok during my absence. I looked in at Sipsu's and Kulutinguah's tupeks, but found both families sleeping, and had just returned to the shack when the dogs began howling, and glancing up the mountain-side I discovered two more Eskimo families with komatiks working their way down. The new comers proved to be Tukshu with his kooner Evaloo, and Oxpuddyshou with his family. The Eskimos were entirely without food for themselves or their dogs, and though Oxpuddyshou and Tukshu were very tired after a hard journey from Etah, they started out with several others to hunt seals as soon as their tupeks were pitched. Late the next day Awhella and Tukshu returned, and a little later Kulutinguah, Oxpuddyshou and Ilabrado, all of them with seals. Sipsu, they said, had gone on to Humboldt Glacier after bear, and as Abidinguah and Pennipar had not returned it was believed that they also had gone after bear.

I was not at all certain as to dates, but according to my reckoning, on July first with a bright sun almost directly overhead and not a cloud in the sky,

the day suddenly began to grow dark. In a short time it was almost as dark as night. Examining the sun through smoked glasses I discovered that an eclipse was in progress, and that it was almost total, the period of darkness continuing for perhaps fifteen minutes. Every Eskimo in the place came running down to camp, all greatly excited. The women hid themselves in the shack and refused to come out of doors until the eclipse had passed. It was a phenomenon which they could not understand and which terrified them.

Kulutinguah came hurrying into camp the day following the eclipse to tell me he had heard a narwhal blow a short distance out in the open water. We immediately collected the other Eskimos, Kulutinguah got out his kayak while the others loaded my whaleboat upon three sledges, that it might be hauled to open water a considerable distance from land, and in an exceedingly short time we were afloat. Kulutinguah in his kayak followed the edge of the floe and ran now and again into open leads in search of the narwhals, while we in the whaleboat took to the broader water. At length snow began to fall thick and fast, blotting out the land, and, unsuccessful, we were driven back to camp with only some water fowl to reward us. The Eskimos were greatly disappointed at our failure, for they prize the narwhal highly, not only for the food qualities of its flesh and the abundance of oil which it contains, but for the sinew found in the animal's back and utilized as thread for sewing skins.

Before camp was reached the snow turned into pouring rain, which deluged everything and very quickly transformed the whole country into a sea of slush. The shack, wet before, was now almost uninhabitable. Kulutinguah fortunately possessed a tupek which was not in use, and this he placed at my service and helped me pitch it. With all the loose boards I could find I made a floor for it, raised a little above the wet, cold earth, moved my sleeping-bag and other belongings in, and found it a great improvement over the dreary shack, which I was quite certain was responsible for an attack of rheumatism from which I suffered. It was very pleasant to awake the next morning, after a good night's sleep, to lie cosily in my sleeping-bag and hear the rain pouring on the tupek and realize that I was snug and dry.

The whaleboat had been left on the edge of the ice when we returned from the unsuccessful narwhal hunt, as the Eskimos were of the opinion that there was no immediate danger of the ice going out. Billy and I had gone to bed and were just dropping into sleep on the following evening, when Kulutinguah came in to say that the ice was breaking up a short distance from the boat and we must hurry to save it. We got up at once, and with Kulutinguah and a few other Eskimos to assist, hauled it to the nearest point of land and safety. It was disagreeable work, with a strong wind blowing and rain and snow falling, but we were fortunate to have secured it as we did, for the ice was crumbling away

## 358 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

rapidly and in a short time would have carried the boat with it.

The storm lasted for three days, then the sun came out hot, with not a breath of wind blowing. This, the Eskimos declared, was an ideal day for seal-hunting, as with sun and calm following the storm the seals would be found sleeping upon the ice. Accordingly most of the men left us for the northward, to be absent for two "sleeps," but seal-hunting now offered too little sport for me to join them.

At length the Sound was open to the southward, save for numerous floating icebergs as far as one could see. Streams of water rushed in torrents down the mountain-side, loosening great boulders which every little while came crashing down with a great noise. As the ice broke away the bird life so plentiful at Etah appeared here also. Thousands of ducks, geese, several kinds of gulls, little auks in great flocks, and sea-pigeons were to be seen everywhere upon the water. Summer was pushing its way northward.

Late one afternoon four walrus appeared a short distance southward from camp. Portlooner—the only Eskimo now in the settlement except women and children—gave chase at once in his kayak, while Billy, some Eskimo boys and myself, followed in the boat. We returned unsuccessful, but had been in bed only a little while when Portlooner called to me hurriedly that several more walrus were in the water very near. I dressed quickly, launched the boat, and with five

of the young boys followed Portlooner's kayak. In a very few minutes he had his harpoon in an old bull. It was a very lively old walrus and made a long run from camp before it was finally killed. With a strong head wind and the tide against us it was found such slow work towing the carcass back to camp that we finally landed it on a pan of ice to dissect, and it was wonderful to see the dexterity with which even the small boys wielded the knife in cutting the animal up, and how quickly it was accomplished. Not a scrap was wasted, and with all of it finally stowed in the boat we resumed our pull toward camp.

We were perhaps a mile from Annootok when a large school of narwhals was sighted some distance away, but unfortunately we were too heavily laden with walrus meat to follow. It was a beautiful spectacle when the whole school rose to blow almost in unison, as they frequently did, the long white ivory horns of the males gleaming in the sunlight. Only the males have horns—usually one, rarely two—which protrude approximately from the middle of the head and vary in length from four to eight feet. I have never been able to get a satisfactory explanation as to why nature has provided them with the horn. From my own observation, and from the testimony of the Eskimos, I am certain they never fight among themselves, and they appear never to use it in attack upon other animals, and I believe never defend themselves with it. It is very handsome ivory, of considerable commercial value, prized by traders who are



## 360 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

apparently able to make better, or at least more profitable use of it than the narwhal does.

Some of the seal-hunters had returned from the north, and it was decided that as soon as we had something to eat and a little rest a hunting-party should be made up to follow the narwhals. In the meantime two of the Eskimos climbed a high ice pinnacle and kept constant watch upon the herd.

At length every one was ready to start and the boat was loaded. Upon Portlooner's advice we prepared for an extended absence, some deerskins were included for a bed, and in view of my recent experience when walrus-hunting an ample supply of provisions was not omitted. Billy and six Eskimos accompanied me in the boat, and Kulutinguah took the kayak, which would be necessary in harpooning.

Just as we were starting I made two fortunate shots at seals in the water, killing both seals and securing them. I tried also for a square flipper, the largest seal found in these waters, but missed it. The square flipper's skin is thicker than that of other species abounding here, and is utilized chiefly for boot-soles, harpoon-lines and dog-traces, for it is also stronger, with greater lasting qualities, than that of other seals.

We followed the main ice floe for a considerable distance, to a point some eight miles off shore, where a landing was made and the boat hauled upon the ice. Here the Eskimos separated that they might keep a lookout from several stations for narwhal,

while Billy and myself rolled up upon the ice in our deerskins and were soon asleep.

After some forty hours of fruitless searching and watching for the herd, the Eskimos gave up the hunt, and, disappointed, we turned back to camp, every one thoroughly tired. We had been sleeping but a very little while when Kulutinguah roused Billy and me with the announcement that narwhals were again heard blowing. We tumbled out in a hurry, and a few minutes later, with the same crew as before, were headed across Smith Sound. When nearly half way to Ellesmere Land the boat was hauled upon the floe, and lookouts established as on the former occasion.

Thus some two hours passed, when Portlooner sighted two narwhals blowing a long way off but heading toward us. Kulutinguah launched his kayak at once and idly drifted around for an hour or so, when suddenly he began paddling very fast. He was soon so far away that in the intense glare it was difficult to follow his movements. Tukshu, however, who was watching him steadily through my glasses, presently rushed to the boat, shouting the announcement that Kulutinguah had harpooned a narwhal.

All was hurry and confusion in a moment. The boat was pushed into the water, we tumbled into it, and in less time than it requires to describe it were in hot pursuit of Kulutinguah, whom the narwhal was towing rapidly to the southward. When after a long

## 362 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

chase we overtook him, the narwhal was becoming very tired and bleeding badly where Kulutinguah had lanced it in several places. The Eskimos in the boat were nearly beside themselves with excitement and every one of them who had a rifle tried to get a shot at the narwhal. After a time I succeeded in quieting the men down and then with my 30-40 rifle put three bullets in it and killed it.

It proved to be a large female. I was greatly disappointed that it was not a male, as I had hoped to secure a good horn. We lashed it alongside the boat and had a hard pull of several miles to our bivouac on the ice.

Here a pulley was rigged, similar to that employed in hauling in walrus, and the narwhal's body was warped upon the ice by the combined efforts of all hands. It was eighteen feet in length, and in general appearance resembled a small whale. The skin was very thick, and of a whitish shade, covered with spots and blotches of black.

The narwhal having been harpooned by Kulutinguah, it was looked upon as his capture. As soon as it was hauled out of the water, and before the others put knives into it or tasted its flesh, he performed a curious ceremony over it. Drawing his knife, he cut two small strips of skin from the top of the narwhal's head, and very carefully removed one of its eyes. These strips and the eye he then carried to the top of a small snow-covered hummock of ice some two hundred yards distant. In the hummock he cut a hole, into which he carefully laid the eye and the two



THE RETURN FROM A SEAL HUNT



strips of skin, and painstakingly covered them. He then walked around the hummock three times, clapping his hands and chanting. This done, he returned to the narwhal, removed the remaining eye and ate it, after which he and all of the Eskimos cut and ate small strips of the skin.

Later I asked Kulutinguah the significance of the ceremony, and he explained to me that this was the first narwhal of the season, and each year when the first narwhal was killed, in order that future success in the hunt be assured, it was necessary for the man that harpooned the narwhal to make an offering of the eye and strips of skin to the spirit which presided over the hunt, and at the same time make an appeal to the spirit to permit the hunter to kill many more before the sun again disappeared and the long night came.

I never witnessed such a butchering as followed this ceremony, and I never saw men eat such quantities of food as these Eskimos consumed of the uncooked flesh. The carcass was cut into pieces weighing from fifty to one hundred pounds each, and there was such a quantity of it that the boat would not carry it all in one load. Fortunately the sea was calm, for we were loaded to the gunwales when we began a hard, tedious pull to camp.

Long before we reached Annootok the Eskimos began shouting and signaling with their oars to those on shore, announcing our success. All the women and children, in a state of frenzied excitement, gathered at the landing to greet us as we drew near, and

the moment the boat's prow touched the shore ice each grabbed for a piece of the narwhal meat, and cut from it strips of skin, which they ravenously chewed.

With instructions to call me at once, should more narwhals be sighted, I left the overjoyed and excited people for a good meal, for I was half famished—for cooked food, be it said—and much in need of rest.

How the human body can withstand the tax of endurance that the Eskimos constantly subject themselves to is beyond my understanding. I am sure that on many occasions while I was with them they passed through periods exceeding three days and three nights without sleep, when waiting for opportunities to kill walrus and narwhals. Constant watchfulness is of course with them the price of life. They must take advantage of every opportunity to kill game, for this is their only means of obtaining a livelihood. They cannot lean upon others for support, and none among them is so poor that charity comes his way. He must work if he is to live, and no man in the world works so hard as the Eskimo, or enjoys so little of life's comforts or luxuries.

The hunters were now keeping unremittent watch for narwhals, and Kulutinguah called me out of my first sound sleep to say that the weather and conditions were fine for a hunt. I lost no time in preparation, and in a little while we were pulling down along the edge of the main ice in the whale-boat, and had gone but a short distance when a school of blow-

ing narwhals was sighted. As Kulutinguah was starting after them in his kayak I warned him to harpoon only males, as I desired horns for trophies. They were so close at hand that we could watch his movements without difficulty. Three different narwhals were seen to rise very near him, but he made no movement to throw his harpoon. It was evident they were females. All of the Eskimos in the boat at once became very angry with me. They said a great deal about my prohibiting the killing of females, and that because of it they were to lose game which they needed to supply them with food, light and heat during the long winter night that would so soon come. I explained that my prohibition included only this hunt, and after we had secured a good horn as a trophy they would be free to do as they pleased. I realized that unless some restriction of this kind were made, they would make no especial effort to harpoon males, if females happened to be easier to reach, and as a result I might fail to add a narwhal trophy to my collection.

We disembarked upon the ice, drew up the boat, and for some time watched Kulutinguah, who had moved farther away. In the course of two hours he paddled back to us to tell me that while he had had good opportunities to harpoon seven narwhals, he had refrained from doing so because none of them had horns, and asked if he might now kill a female. There were a large number of narwhals about; I could see them blowing everywhere. Very certain, therefore, that with a little further effort a male



might be found, I replied "No." All of the Eskimos at once began to sulk. Kulutinguah refused to go out again, declaring that all the narwhals in sight were females, and the whole crowd sat idly about upon the ice. They were as contrary as a lot of children.

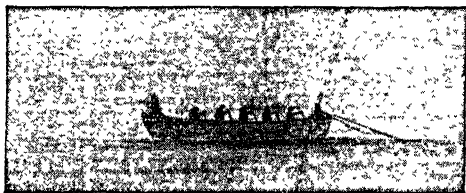
Finally, in view of the mood they were in, I told Kulutinguah to go ahead and harpoon the first one he could. He started for them at once, and in a very few minutes had fastened to one. We launched the boat, soon overtook him, and I had a lively experience killing the narwhal, which required ten shots, though there was no way of knowing how many of the bullets hit.

When it was finally dead and we hauled the body alongside the boat, I saw that it was a male of fair size, though with a very small horn—not more than three and a half feet in length. With this, however, I had to be satisfied, for the boat would accommodate the meat of but one animal, and to kill more until this was cared for would have been wasteful.

While pulling back to Annootok I questioned Kulutinguah as to the habits of narwhals, and his reply, when I asked him whether they would be likely to remain in these waters another day, covered the whole subject in a few expressive words. "I don't know," said he. "*Kullure* [narwhals] have no igloo, and never remain still in one place."

The season was growing late, and with a great many things to be transferred to Etah, and a good deal to

be done in preparation for my home going, I decided to be satisfied with this one narwhal trophy. Accordingly preparations were made for our immediate departure to Etah.





## XXII

### DUCK SHOOTING ON THE ISLANDS

THE ice to the southward had moved out, save of course the ever present, shifting bergs and floes, and the journey to Etah was to be by boat. So many things had accumulated during the winter that I was kept pretty busy for several hours marshaling my belongings and packing boxes for the trip. When at length this was accomplished conditions were favorable for a good run to Etah and we decided to start at once. Everything was accordingly carried down upon the ice-foot ready for loading, and we were about to launch the boat when Kulutinguah, smiling and very much pleased, joined us and announced that a little baby-girl had just been born to his kooner Tongwe. His mission was to invite me to his tupek to inspect the new arrival. I congratulated him, accepted his invitation, and went immediately to have a look at the youngest child I had ever seen.

It is the custom of these Eskimos to examine critically all children shortly after birth, and if any deformity is discovered the child is not permitted to live. Smothering, I believe, is the method employed in destroying life in such cases. Kulutinguah asked

me to make an examination in this instance and pass judgment, but I declined the honor, explaining that I knew very little about any children, and nothing whatever about children so very young as this one, therefore my judgment would be valueless. I did not know just what points to look for, the youngster did not appear to me as one for the parents to be proud of, but I had no desire to hurt their feelings by telling them so.

The mother had wrapped the baby in hareskin as soon as it was born, and I was much interested in the tiny fur clothing that she had prepared for its later use. When Eskimos have no hareskin, grass is used for wrapping new-born babies, to keep them warm, until they can be clothed. Tongwe seemed very well indeed. Eskimo women suffer slight inconvenience in bearing children, and two or three hours after the birth are seen attending to their duties as usual.

Our boat was heavily laden, and the cargo so bulky that there was scarcely room to wield the oars, but a light north wind was blowing to help us, and, once away from land, sail was hoisted. Though a great deal of small ice was scattered over the water and had to be avoided, we averaged three and a half miles an hour, enjoying a fine run down.

Upon reaching McGary Island—a small but high, rock-bound island lying a few hundred yards outside of Littleton Island—Portlooner, who had brought his kayak with him, decided to leave us and remain for a little while on the island to hunt ducks and gather ducks' eggs. The place was simply alive with eider

## 372 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

ducks, to say nothing of great numbers of brant geese and gulls which rested upon it and were to be seen everywhere.

It is the custom of the Eskimos to kill ducks on Littleton and McGary Islands and to gather quantities of eggs, very plentiful during the nesting period, which they cache as a food reserve for the winter. These are not only a very welcome change from the more or less continuous diet of seal and walrus, at a season when birds and eggs are not to be had, but are prized as great delicacies, just as we in civilization prize out-of-season fruits and vegetables.

With nothing to call me in haste to Etah, and anxious, as I always was, to see as many phases of Eskimo life as possible, I decided to remain on the island with Portlooner, and therefore disembarked with him. We made a landing among the rocks after considerable manœuvering and the others continued the voyage to Etah, with instructions to care for the cargo and return with the boat for us in three days.

As soon as our landing was made, Portlooner and I built a wind-break of rocks behind which to bivouac. Our primitive camp thus made, and all snug, we sallied forth at once to the hunt, each with a shotgun, his an old muzzle loader, mine a Winchester pump gun.

Never have I seen such quantities of eggs as we found here. Nests of them were scattered over the whole surface of the island. Portlooner carried a



KULUTINGUAH'S KOONER



sack and turned his attention at once to gathering the eggs. In a very little while he had as many as he could carry. A short distance below us, on the steep hillside, was a crevice between the rocks, and in this he cached his first sackful, covering them carefully with loose stones that nothing might disturb them. In similar manner he made many caches, and in a few hours must have stored at least a thousand eggs. In a single cache I counted two hundred and seventy-six.

The eider duck nests on flat bits of ground covered with a soft, thick moss. When the old duck chooses a suitable spot she scratches a hole of the proper size in the moss, then lines it with down which she plucks from her own breast, and here lays sometimes three, sometimes four, eggs, and hatches her brood. I followed Portlooner, and wherever he robbed a nest, gathered the down into a bag. It is very soft, warm and light. Ducks whose nests have been robbed will lay a second and even a third time, always re-lining the nest with fresh down. I killed ducks which had plucked themselves almost bare.

Finally I told Portlooner that if he wished to continue gathering eggs, I would shoot as many ducks for him as I could. I had forty shot cartridges with me, and in a little while brought down twenty-nine ducks, and wounded some, which unfortunately got into the water and out of reach before I could capture them.

My cartridges gone, I gathered some twenty brant



eggs and a few gull eggs of different varieties, for my collection of specimens. These I blew and prepared for transportation home, and after several hours' absence returned to our camp on the north side of the island.

Two hours later Portlooner joined me, explaining that he had been setting steel traps for ducks. I lighted my oil stoves, fried some ducks' breasts in their own grease for dinner—and very palatable they were—and we started out again, Portlooner after eggs and I after ducks.

In this hunt I used my .22 automatic rifle, as I had no more shot cartridges with me, and found it necessary to shoot setting birds. I am well aware that this method of hunting will appeal to the sportsman as butchery, and of course that is all it was. It offered no sport, and there was no more pleasure in it than in butchering a lot of domesticated fowls. But fowls are butchered in much greater numbers every year for the markets of civilization, and not by the consumers, either. Those who may be inclined to cry, therefore, against my duck killing at this time, should remember that they never question the propriety of killing domesticated fowls, and that he who eats them is as blameworthy as the butcher who kills them. During my stay with the Eskimos I was constantly under obligation to them. They devoted their time to assist me in various ways—time that normally they should have occupied in killing birds and animals, during the short season of plenty, as food provision against the long dark winter of

paucity, for if Eskimos eat and live they can never relax efforts to provide. Therefore I felt it my duty, when occasion offered, as it did now, to aid them in accumulating stores for future use as recompense for the time they had devoted to me. This, then, was my reason for killing ducks in the manner which I shall describe, and it will not be necessary to explain to sportsmen that it was disagreeable, necessary work, possessing no attractions to the hunter. But I am making a complete record of my Arctic life and hunting, and even incidents of this character cannot be omitted if the record is to be an honest one.

Ducks and geese conceal their nests very cunningly, and rarely were we able to see the birds upon them until they flew at our approach. When a duck left its nest Portlooner set his steel trap directly in front of the nest. Ducks seldom rise on the wing without a short preliminary run, and in making the run were pretty certain to be caught. When all of the traps were set, we marked with small piles of stones the places where other ducks or geese rose from their nests, and later I returned and killed the birds after they resumed their nests. My method was to approach as nearly as possible and shoot them on the nests with my .22 automatic. In this manner I secured thirty-eight ducks and six brants in addition to those trapped by Portlooner and the twenty-nine which I originally killed on the wing. Later, as I lay in my sleeping-bag, countless thousands passed over my head in a continuous stream, and I was sorry I had not an ample supply of shot cartridges, for I

## 378 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

might have remained in one position and secured in a little while as many as were needed.

We had been on the island four days when Billy and five Eskimos returned with the boat. Shortly after their arrival five walrus were sighted not far away, sleeping on a pan of ice. Portlooner and I launched the boat at once, stole upon the game, and were fortunate enough to capture two of them. The meat was carried to Littleton Island, and while the Eskimos were engaged in caching it I took a fresh supply of shot-cartridges, which Billy had brought me, stationed myself between two large rocks in a low, grassy spot, and in two hours winged and secured one hundred and seventy-two ducks as they flew over my head. Reserving a few for immediate use I divided my kill between Kulutinguah and Portlooner, who received them with expressions of delight, and each immediately cached his share.

Without further delay we ran down to Etah, where we found the Eskimos rejoicing over ten walrus they had just killed, a very material addition to their winter stores. None of the walrus had tusks worth keeping, but their skins, all of which the hunters were saving for Peary, were in good shape.

Shortly after we arrived rain began, with a strong south wind, and the weather was so disagreeable all day, with alternate rain, hail and snow, that I remained in camp and spent my time patching clothing with indifferent results, as most of my things were in rags and under other circumstances would have





SHOOTING DUCK AND GATHERING EGGS, LITTLETON ISLAND

been discarded as past usefulness. The weather, however, was now so warm that birdskin shirts and fur outer garments which I had been wearing, were too uncomfortable, particularly around camp, and I felt compelled to provide something more suitable.

Several of the Eskimos were exceedingly anxious to return to Littleton Island to make caches of ducks and eggs, and camp idleness was so irksome that I consented to accompany and assist them. For two days, however, high seas forbade launching the boat, and after the sun came out, while we waited favorable conditions to get away, I joined Kulutinguah in netting little auks and watched him skin them with lightning rapidity. I tried my hand at skinning them for a little while, but was slow and clumsy, and my neck and arms grew very tired.

When at length the sea became less boisterous, we packed our outfits and made the start for Littleton Island—three Eskimos and myself. Upon reaching Ohlsen Point, however, a long line of heavy ice cut off our advance, and this, with a strong and increasing north wind, decided us to retreat to Etah and await more favorable conditions.

Upon turning about, we soon discovered that so strong a tide was running against us that with our utmost efforts we could not gain a foot of headway, and nothing remained for us to do but make the best possible landing upon the nearest rocks. This we accomplished, but in so unfavorable a position that our combined strength was not sufficient to haul the

## 382 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

boat out of the water, and for a little while I feared it would be smashed to pieces in spite of anything we could do.

As I have said before, however, one cannot feaze the Eskimos. They seem able to meet all emergencies and to surmount all obstacles. So it was in this instance. They set themselves at once to rigging up an improvised pulley, and by fastening their lines to a large boulder some distance back from the shore, soon and with apparently little difficulty had the boat high and dry and out of reach of the battering waves.

All of our belongings, including my guns, ammunition, and bed were packed in the boat, and we walked back to camp, very fortunate to have postponed the expedition, for a terrific northeast gale was soon sweeping the sea.

Until this time much ice had held fast in the harbor. Now it broke loose, and was driven out before the gale. One pan, perhaps two miles long and one mile wide, passed down close to shore, grinding and smashing against the rocks with terrific force and thunderous hammerings, which combined with the roar and shriek of wind to create a noise that was deafening. For more than an hour I stood and watched the driving pan and all the mighty forces of nature performing in awful grandeur before me. It was fascinating beyond description, and the wild beauty of sea and land held me entranced.

Though still some ice remained at the head of the harbor, the greater part of it passed out, transform-

ing in a remarkable manner the whole appearance of our surroundings.

When the storm was over I noticed that the little auks, now that the ice was gone, flew much lower when beyond the land than formerly when the sea was frozen. For hours at a time I sat on the rocks to watch great clouds of the birds flying hither and thither, now showing black, now gleaming white, as they wheeled in the sunlight, and so numerous that their wings, in a continuous passage of flocks over my head, gave forth a sound like escaping steam from a locomotive boiler.

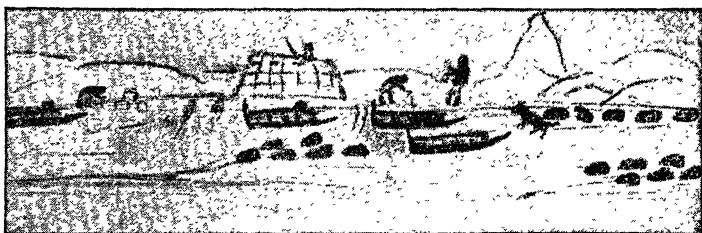
With cessation of the wind I took a long walk over the hills in search of young hares, which the Eskimos told me should now be large enough to be out. I wished to capture some to take home with me alive as zoölogical specimens. In the course of my walk I saw but one, and it was so exceedingly alive and so good a sprinter that I could not catch it. I had no salt with me, and the hare had no tail to put it on, anyway. When I returned to camp I offered the Eskimos some tobacco for every young hare they brought me alive and uninjured, and had high hopes that in a little while they would catch enough for my purpose. Shortly after making them the offer, several of the men started upon the quest and in less than two hours Portlooner and Pennipar returned, each with one captive. The young hares were very pretty little things, exactly matching the rocks in color. When three weeks of age they turn a snowy



## 384 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

white. By piling boxes I made an excellent run for them eight by ten feet in size, which seemed to satisfy them very well. These, let me say, were the only live specimens of animals I then had, the second baby musk-ox, captured by the Eskimos, having died in captivity.





## XXIII

### THE DANGERS OF THE SEA

**W**ITH continuous day and nature's consequent lessened demand for sleep, I was possessed with increased restlessness, and a desire always to be on the move. Therefore when the sea subsided and the Eskimos invited me to accompany them on a walrus hunt, I welcomed the opportunity.

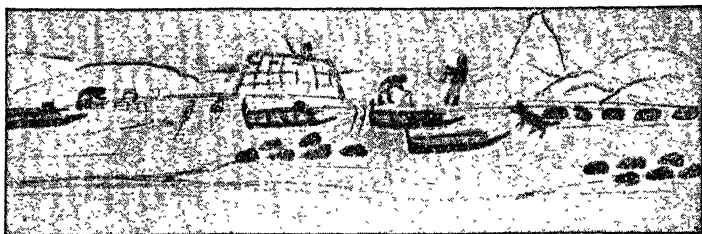
While the men were bringing around the boat, which was still on the rocks where we had left it after our attempt and failure to reach Littleton Island, I went to the mouth of a large stream emptying into the bay to fish. The Eskimos had told me that every year after the ice went out they had observed numbers of large fish here, and I determined to catch some of them if possible. For half an hour I tried spoon-casting, but not one strike did I get as a reward.

In my walk over the rocks to the stream I came upon a bed of dandelions which had just come up. When fishing failed I returned to the dandelion bed and picked a large quantity of the leaves, which I carried back to camp, washed thoroughly, and then boiled with generous pieces of pork. The result was the

## 384 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

white. By piling boxes I made an excellent run for them eight by ten feet in size, which seemed to satisfy them very well. These, let me say, were the only live specimens of animals I then had, the second baby musk-ox, captured by the Eskimos, having died in captivity.





## XXIII

### THE DANGERS OF THE SEA

**W**ITH continuous day and nature's consequent lessened demand for sleep, I was possessed with increased restlessness, and a desire always to be on the move. Therefore when the sea subsided and the Eskimos invited me to accompany them on a walrus hunt, I welcomed the opportunity.

While the men were bringing around the boat, which was still on the rocks where we had left it after our attempt and failure to reach Littleton Island, I went to the mouth of a large stream emptying into the bay to fish. The Eskimos had told me that every year after the ice went out they had observed numbers of large fish here, and I determined to catch some of them if possible. For half an hour I tried spoon-casting, but not one strike did I get as a reward.

In my walk over the rocks to the stream I came upon a bed of dandelions which had just come up. When fishing failed I returned to the dandelion bed and picked a large quantity of the leaves, which I carried back to camp, washed thoroughly, and then boiled with generous pieces of pork. The result was the

most sumptuous and satisfying meal that I had eaten since leaving home. These dandelions were the first greens that I had had in over a year, and a keen craving for fresh vegetables had possessed me. The best hotel in New York City could not have served a more satisfactory dinner.

In the meantime the Eskimos arrived with the boat, I made tea for them, and we started at once for Littleton Island, where it was hoped walrus would be found. Camp was pitched, and after shooting a few ducks I retired to rest.

I had scarcely fallen asleep when the Eskimos close alongside the tent began firing at ducks flying overhead. The discharge of guns was so continuous that it sounded like a battle in progress. Further sleep being out of the question I arose, and upon leaving the tent found a fresh south wind had sprung up. Kulutinguah met me to say no walrus were to be seen, and as there seemed little chance of getting any he had decided to go to Annootok to bring Tongwe and his family down. Several of the other Eskimos expressed a desire to go also. The wind was fair, and as I was as well satisfied to go there as to remain at Etah, I told them I would run up with them in the boat and we could return as soon as the wind shifted again to the north. This pleased them immensely, as without the boat they would have had a long, hard walk in both directions over the rocks.

The wind had increased to almost a gale by the time the boat was loaded and launched, and before we started I took two reefs in the sail. Five minutes

later I realized that we had made a great mistake in venturing from the island, but with wind and tide against us return was impossible. I had experienced many narrow escapes from death while in the Arctic, but none, it seemed to me then, to compare with the experience that followed.

The gale suddenly developed into a hurricane. The seas were tremendous and every moment I expected the boat to be swamped. Any attempt to reach the nearest land, half a mile away, seemed hopeless. The Eskimos, speechless with fright, huddled in the bottom of the boat. They lost their heads completely and were as helpless as children. Seas broke over us and we were shipping a great deal of water. I was at the steering-oar, and called desperately to Kulutinguah to lower sail; but mute and panic-stricken he sat still and only pointed at the nearest land, which was quite impossible to make, as any attempt to reach it would have taken us broad-side upon the seas and brought instant wreck. Our only chance was to keep running before the gale and try for a landing farther on.

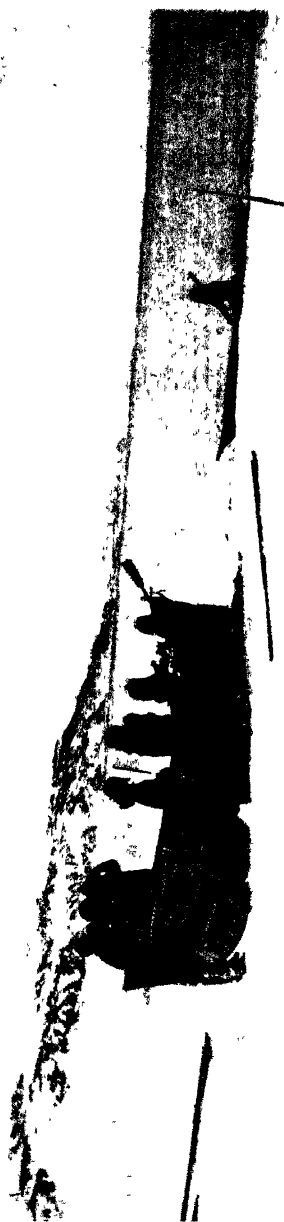
Tossing all about us upon the crest of foam and rollers were vagrant pieces of ice, and these added to our danger, for had one of them struck our boat it would have crushed it like a shell. I had worked the boat fairly close to land, and was all but exhausted handling the steering-oar alone when one of these cakes of ice loomed up before us. Portlooner saw the ice, and realizing the imminent peril so far overcame his fears as to respond to my demand for as-

sistance. With his help at the oar we barely succeeded in shaving the pan without striking it. None of the Eskimos could swim a stroke, no man could have withstood the low temperature of the water for long even under the most favorable circumstances, and had we struck that pan of ice all hands would have been lost.

We were at length within reach of shore, and fortunately approaching at a point where the rocks sloped gently down into the sea with a flat surface. Here I drove the boat. We struck with considerable force, and before we could tumble out upon the rocks a big wave broke over us, but the landing was made in safety, though all were thoroughly soaked.

I was never more glad of anything in my life than when I felt the good old land under my feet again, and I offered up a sincere prayer of thanks for our deliverance. With active work all of our outfit was saved, and the boat, little the worse for her experience, hauled to a safe place. This happened only a few hundred yards from the place where the *Polaris* was wrecked several years before.

The excitement through which I had passed was so great that for a long while I could not sleep, and I sat in my open tent and watched the sea, as wild and rough as the farthest flights of imagination could picture. Innumerable blocks of ponderous ice rode the crests of waves and in every direction lay mighty icebergs. As the sea dashed against the bergs, spurts of spray shot high in the air, reflecting all the colors of the rainbow. One is seldom privileged to witness



READY TO LAUNCH THE WHALE-BOAT; KULUTINGUAH IN THE KAYAK





such a scene of rough, wild, storm-tossed sea, dashing spray and massive icebergs, interspersed with transcendent beauty of coloring. That so short a time before we had been at its mercy, tossed upon its surface with nothing but our frail little craft between us and eternity and had escaped, was hard for me to realize. Our escape was surely a miracle, and I could not but feel that I had been guided in my management of the boat by the hand of Providence.

Finally tired nature asserted herself and I fell asleep. When I awoke the gale was still blowing and it seemed that the tent could hardly stand another instant. The sky was overcast and a fine mist falling. There was no chance of getting away by water, and I decided to walk back the twelve miles to Etah and leave the boat for the Eskimos to take down when the wind subsided. But after talking it over with Kulutinguah, he told me the others said they could not return to Etah as they wished to get to Annootok as quickly as possible, and that if I walked to Etah they would leave the boat and walk to Annootok at once. I objected to the boat being left in the position where it then was without some one to guard it, and though they promised to return later for it I declined to leave it or permit them to leave it. There was a great deal of talking and argument which finally ended in an agreement that we all remain until the weather moderated and continue our journey together to Annootok by water.

It should be understood that though my Eskimo companions were panic-stricken when the storm

struck us in the boat upon the open seas, they were by no means cowards. They are as brave and fearless as any people in the world. Their fear in this instance was born of helplessness, not of cowardice. They have not been trained in the handling of sailboats, and as novices know nothing of the management of boats under conditions such as were experienced by us on this occasion. They had never been in just that predicament before and they did not know of their own knowledge what to do under the circumstances. This utter lack of knowledge was the cause of the panic which paralyzed them so that they were unable to act in response to my commands. For Eskimos, like all wilderness-dwellers, are accustomed to act upon personal initiative and not under the direction of others. It is a psychological axiom that man will become so accustomed to dangers with which his daily life brings him in constant contact that he will not recognize them as dangers at all. While this is true, panic will strike him when he finds himself suddenly in positions infinitely less dangerous, but with which he is wholly unfamiliar and which he does not know instinctively how to combat. Thus Eskimos will cross flimsy ice that a white man would not dare venture upon; they will take chances in the hunt that to the uninitiated would seem suicidal, and they will risk their life in a thousand other ways where their training and knowledge gives them confidence that in emergency they will act to the best advantage; but set one down suddenly, unattended, in a big city, and he would be paralyzed with fear.

At length the wind sufficiently moderated for us to resume our journey. Pennipar and Awhella each wished to put a kayak in the boat, but there was not room for the two kayaks and I declined to permit it. The two men at once grew so sulky and disagreeable that I felt compelled to leave them behind to work their way to Annootok, or back to Etah, as best they could.

We were less than half way to Annootok when the wind died out completely and all hands had to take the oars. I never saw men work harder, but in spite of their efforts it seemed as though we hardly moved. The Eskimos were game, however, and never let up on their oars for a moment, even when much loose ice was encountered, through which our way was made with increased difficulty, and rowing was unusually hard, the oars constantly striking ice. Our arrival at Annootok created much excitement and our welcome was noisy and boisterous. The people, consisting chiefly of women and children, were overjoyed to see us.

I was very tired and hungry, and looked forward to a good rest before starting back. But one can never count upon anything in the Arctic. I pitched my tent quickly, put over a large pot of little auks to boil; and made tea for the men who had worked so hard, and myself. Then I lay down for the longed-for rest, but had not fallen asleep when Kulutinguah came hurriedly in to say that a light breeze had sprung up from the northward, that large sheets of ice could be seen driving rapidly down from the

north, with no open water visible in the direction of Cape Sabine, and that we had better get away at once. Kulutinguah realized that I was very tired, and he added, "Ice no good, but just as you say about starting." I said we would start at once, for his information meant that the northern jam had broken loose, and that if we expected to get out in the boat it was necessary to move without delay, for following this there would be one continual run of ice to the southward.

All was hurry and confusion immediately. In less than an hour Kulutinguah had his tupek down and packed with my things in the boat. Every one, it then developed, was anxious to go with us, and I offered a passage to as many as we could carry. The boat load was not heavy, but very bulky, and I could hardly see where all the people could be stowed, but somehow they huddled in. Besides all the men who came with me, except Portlooner, who decided to remain at Annootok, we had with us Tongwe and three piccaninnies, and Ilabrado, his kooner and two piccaninnies, with all their belongings.

Much small ice made it difficult to get the boat away from land, and interfered with progress for a mile or so, before we came into fairly clear water. An almost dead calm prevailed when we started, but now the wind was freshening out of the north, and we hoisted sail, running straight before it and making fast time. The wind continued to increase, and when we reached Cairn Point it was blowing so strong that we took in the peak of the sail. A tremendous sea





THE *ERG* WORKING HER WAY THROUGH SMALL ICE

rolled behind us, and the kooners and piccaninnies became speechless with fright. It was a new method of traveling to them and they were experiencing new sensations.

Presently the wind attained such velocity that I decided upon a prompt landing. This proved anything but an easy accomplishment, for the shores here were rugged, lined with grim, forbidding rocks against which the sea broke with such force that it seemed hopeless for a time to discover an opening between them where the boat could be beached with safety.

At length I headed for Lifeboat Cove in almost the same place where we made the landing on the up trip. Here I espied a narrow sand-bank hedged in upon either side by jagged rocks. It was the most available place to beach her, and though a ticklish place to steer into under the conditions of wind and tide, decided we must do it and take our chance, for our little craft could not live much longer in the rising gale and sea. All sail was taken in a considerable distance from land, and I instructed the people to be ready to leap ashore the moment we struck, or the next roller would be likely to carry them away.

For a moment it looked as though we should miss the sand and strike the rocks, but fortunately, though by an exceedingly narrow margin, it was made. We hit hard, and before all could get out wave after wave tumbled over our stern. Everybody and everything was drenched, but fortunately no one was injured, and the boat was hauled ashore without damage.



At the end of five hours the wind moderated, and though a heavy swell was rolling in we launched, and made a good run down to Etah, where I was very glad to go to bed and get the first comfortable sleep I had enjoyed for many days.

Aside from little auks the Eskimos had but small store of meat or food at Etah, and they devoted every opportunity when not otherwise employed, to netting the birds. The young birds were now coming out of the nests between the rocks, and were the funniest, downiest little things I ever saw. They were covered with an outer down that one could readily rub off, disclosing a thick coat of feathers beneath. The little auk has a small pouch, its upper end just under the beak, and expanding a short distance along the throat. In this pouch the old bird carries food to the young, going far out to sea for something that resembles a very small red shrimp. The young half-grown birds were fat and delicious.

Great quantities of little auks were cached, though considerable numbers were required to supply the daily ration. Without exaggeration I may say that on more than one occasion I saw Kulutinguah eat, at a single meal, the breasts of twenty-five full-grown birds, and then complete his repast with generous slices of walrus meat. The tremendous appetite of Eskimos in times of plenty is beyond belief.

While Eskimos are inherently kind and sympathetic to all people, they appear to be wholly void of any appreciation of the suffering dumb creatures. At this season, when life was plentiful, the men and

women frequently gave children live young auks, ducks, gulls and other birds or animals to play with. The children, with strings cut from sealskin, would harness the captives, and lash them with whips to make them run over the ice. When the poor little things became too tired to run, the children would pick them up and throw them down upon the ice with the utmost disregard of their sufferings. On several occasions when I found them engaged in this, I killed the birds to prevent further torture. The parents of the children whose sport was thus stopped invariably resented my interference and in several instances I made myself much disliked by it.

As a general rule the Eskimos were very good natured, however, and on the whole I believe them to be the happiest people in the world. They were always ready for a joke, and, as I have said, would often laugh heartily over incidents that narrowly escaped being tragedies. They have a boisterous if not subtle sense of humor. For instance, after Kulutinguah's return from his journey to the south with Dr. Cook, when I was questioning him as to his experiences he became all at once so convulsed with laughter that it was some time before he could compose himself sufficiently to tell me the cause of his merriment. It appeared that when Dr. Cook reached the Danish settlement at Tessevick, the store-keeper, a Dane, could speak no English, and Dr. Cook could speak little Danish. Dr. Cook and the store-keeper were therefore unable to talk with each other. This appeared to Kulutinguah as very funny, for he had

## 400 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

supposed that all white people could converse together.

Referring again to the Eskimo's kindness to his children, there were times in the long night when the children in the igloos would get on my nerves by calling and sometimes crying for things they wanted. I frequently told the mothers to make the youngsters keep still and that white people spanked children under such circumstances. They always had one answer for me, however: "No good for Eskimo. When the babies get older they will be all right." No matter how busy the parent might be everything would be dropped at once to attend to the child's demands. The little ones ate nearly anything they wanted, and never appeared to be injured by it. Very small tots might be seen at any time chewing pieces of raw seal or walrus meat.

At about fourteen years of age they mate. A woman, however, before taking a husband must be able to sew well and be competent to make his clothing; and before a man takes a wife he must have killed a seal, a bear and a walrus. Such are the Eskimo qualifications for matrimony.

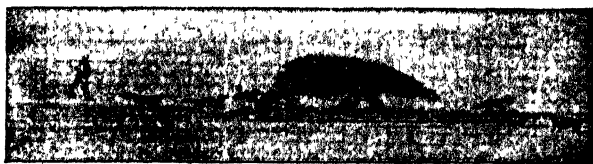
The Eskimo is very considerate of his wife and children. Whenever I gave an Eskimo anything to eat he always carried half of it to his kooner or piccaninny. I never knew this to fail.

They have learned to be inordinately fond of tobacco. It is perhaps their greatest luxury. I used to clean my pipe with feathers from gulls' wings, and whenever I did so when Eskimos were around, they invariably picked up the nicotine-soaked feather

which I threw away, and sucked it. I protested at first that this would make them sick, but they always assured me, "No good for white man, but very good for Eskimo," and I never observed harmful results.

One of my young hares died from some cause, but four others had been captured, leaving me still sufficient for my purpose. They were growing rapidly and almost too big now to hope to capture more. Those in the pen, save the one that died, did very well, and in a short time began to take on their pure white coat.

This was the season for walrus-hunting—when the Eskimos reap their harvest, so to speak, of flesh to feed man and dog during the long winter, when, as we have seen, the most strenuous effort yields only scant results. All hands were therefore constantly on the lookout for herds. Not only to satisfy my restlessness and desire for constant activity, but to aid them in securing and laying in a good stock of provisions, I indicated my desire to accompany and assist them. Walrus-hunting often means exciting sport, particularly when herds of them offer fight. During the following weeks I took part in several of these hunts, some of which are perhaps interesting enough to describe.





## XXIV

### AMONG THE WALRUS HERDS

**W**HEN I arose the morning after our return from Annootok the day was clear and beautiful. The Eskimos were preparing for a walrus hunt and, breakfast eaten, we were off without delay.

Fortune favored us, and three miles from Etah a large school was sighted feeding in the water. Kulutinguah started after them at once in his kayak, and a few minutes later had his harpoon in a large cow. Instantly another cow made for Kulutinguah. He shouted to us to come to his assistance, paddling toward us as fast as he could, with the cow in chase. We barely reached him and had time to haul him out of his kayak into the boat, before we were surrounded by the whole school of enraged walrus.

One large cow with fine tusks came up close to the boat and I shot her dead, but unfortunately before I could get my harpoon ready she sank. The calf of the old one harpooned by Kulutinguah remained on top of the water, bellowing. This appeared to increase the anger of the whole herd, and they kept close to us. I shot another, and after some trouble got my harpoon into it and secured it. Then Ku-

lutinguah's walrus, which had gone a long distance, was overtaken and killed and after some hours' work landed upon a near-by point of land. To my great disappointment neither of those secured, though both were very large, had good tusks.

For nearly forty-eight hours I had been constantly on the move, and the day following the hunt just recorded (August first by my reckoning) I was sleeping soundly, endeavoring to make up lost sleep, when Kulutinguah called me to announce that the wind, which had risen since our return, had moderated again, and through my glasses he could discern large numbers of walrus a short distance outside the little island which lay near the entrance of our harbor. I hurriedly made ready for the chase, and in a short time we were in pursuit.

Kulutinguah preceded the boat in his kayak. An Eskimo in a kayak can travel very fast and he quickly left us well astern. Near the island, however, we found him waiting for us to overtake him, and when we came up with him he told us he had seen a great many walrus feeding on the south side of the island, but as all appeared to have calves he did not care to risk harpooning until we were at hand with the whale-boat as a retreat should they attack his kayak.

With the kayak ahead and our boat close behind we moved down upon the walrus, and as we approached them discovered that there were two large herds instead of one. The sea was literally dotted with the great beasts. Kulutinguah passed very near several of them but did not throw his harpoon and

for a little I wondered at his delay. Then all at once he began paddling very fast and in an instant fixed the harpoon in a big cow with a fine pair of tusks. He had been awaiting an opportunity to select for me a good head.

The moment the harpoon was placed the Eskimo turned and made for our boat as hard as he could paddle, with four large bellowing walrus in close pursuit, while several others of the herd turned to fight the float attached to the harpoon line. The four walrus were close behind Kulutinguah. He reached the boat not a moment too soon, sprang aboard, drew his kayak after him, and was safe by a hair's breadth. The enraged animals, still bellowing, came right at the boat. One big cow almost got her tusks over the gunwale, in an effort to bear the boat down. I stuck my rifle muzzle in her mouth, fired and killed her instantly. The harpoon was in the bottom of the boat, and before the excited Eskimos could make her fast she sank and was lost.

The other three left us and we gave chase to the cow Kulutinguah had harpooned, which had traveled a long distance off-shore. When she was at length overtaken I killed her with one shot, then harpooned her calf, which was a good-sized one, and Kulutinguah shot it when it came to the surface to blow.

The calf was hauled into the boat with some difficulty, for it was bulky, after which the Eskimos cut slits in the skin of the old one, by means of which inflated sealskins were fastened as floats to keep the

carcass well above water that it might be more easily towed ashore.

While we were thus engaged another big cow rose to blow not thirty feet from the boat. I grabbed my rifle and killed her stone dead with one shot. Happily the body kept above water long enough to get a harpoon into her, and with the two old walrus in tow and the young one in the boat, we turned back to the island for a long, hard pull.

Good fortune favored us. When we reached the island the tide was high, and with very little trouble the massive carcasses were hauled well up upon the rocks, where they could be skinned and dissected at leisure when the tide fell. Here they were anchored and secured against danger of slipping back into the water, and without delay we put off again after more game.

One of the large schools was feeding not far away, and in a very short time Kulutinguah had harpooned one from his kayak. I shot and harpooned another from the boat. Both were cows with calves, and the two calves were also killed and taken into the boat. Walrus have but one calf, and the little ones are very dirty, unattractive looking things.

When we reached the island with our game in tow the tide had settled and the two walrus originally killed lay high and dry upon the rocks in an ideal position for skinning. Our last catch was hauled in as far as possible, and we went ashore. We had done a good day's work. The four old ones and three calves



## 406 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

made a fine showing for one hunt, particularly as the old ones were monsters in size.

The wind was rising, and before the meat had been cared for, was blowing so hard as to prohibit further hunting for the day. It was decided, therefore, to return to camp, and without delay the boat was loaded with as much of the meat as we could stow in her, the remainder cached among the rocks, and a good run made back to Etah before a fair breeze.

Following our return the wind blew heavily for a day, holding us close to camp and prohibiting all walrus-hunting. Then, though there was still a good breeze, five Eskimos and myself launched the boat, put sail on her and took a run up the bay to reconnoiter. Before we had reached the end we were running before a gale, with bare mast. Heavy squalls picking up the water in whirlpools as they approached, bore down upon us from the hills, and sailing was so uncertain we put the boat ashore not far from Brother John's Glacier.

There was a stream running out of a lake at the foot of the glacier, and on each side of it was low, mossy ground, which to my delight was now covered with a mass of beautiful flowers. I counted a dozen different varieties. The colors were yellow, purple, blue, white, light green, and one little plant with a lavender blossom and bright red leaves. Of each variety I collected some specimens to press and preserve for my collection, and then for half an hour, while we waited for the squall to pass before turning back to

camp, tried for fish in the brook but, possibly because of the high wind, could not tempt a rise.

Upon reaching Etah, I turned in at once, pretty tired after a hard pull back against the wind, but had scarcely fallen asleep when Kulutinguah came to tell me the wind was falling and walrus were bellowing out at sea.

As quickly as we could make ready for the hunt we were off, Kulutinguah and Tukshu each with his kayak. The game, we discovered, was rushing to the southward, and so wild that after a long, toilsome chase pursuit was abandoned, and we turned for the nearest land without having once been within striking distance.

Here we lay around for two hours, keeping a sharp lookout. Presently three walrus, disconnected from the larger school, were sighted heading northward a long distance off-shore. We watched them closely for some time, until at length the Eskimos announced that they had stopped to feed. This they knew from the fact that when the walrus dived they remained below the water for a considerable period before coming to the surface to blow, and when they did appear after a dive it was each time in practically the same position.

While walrus are thus engaged it is possible to approach them in a kayak within harpooning distance with little difficulty, and Kulutinguah started for these at once, while we followed in the boat. Presently he had a large cow harpooned. The other two,

instead of going away, as it might have been expected they would do, remained to fight the float attached to the harpoon. We were therefore enabled to approach very close with the boat. I drew my rifle and wounded one slightly, killed the other, which was secured, and finally killed the one Kulutinguah had harpooned.

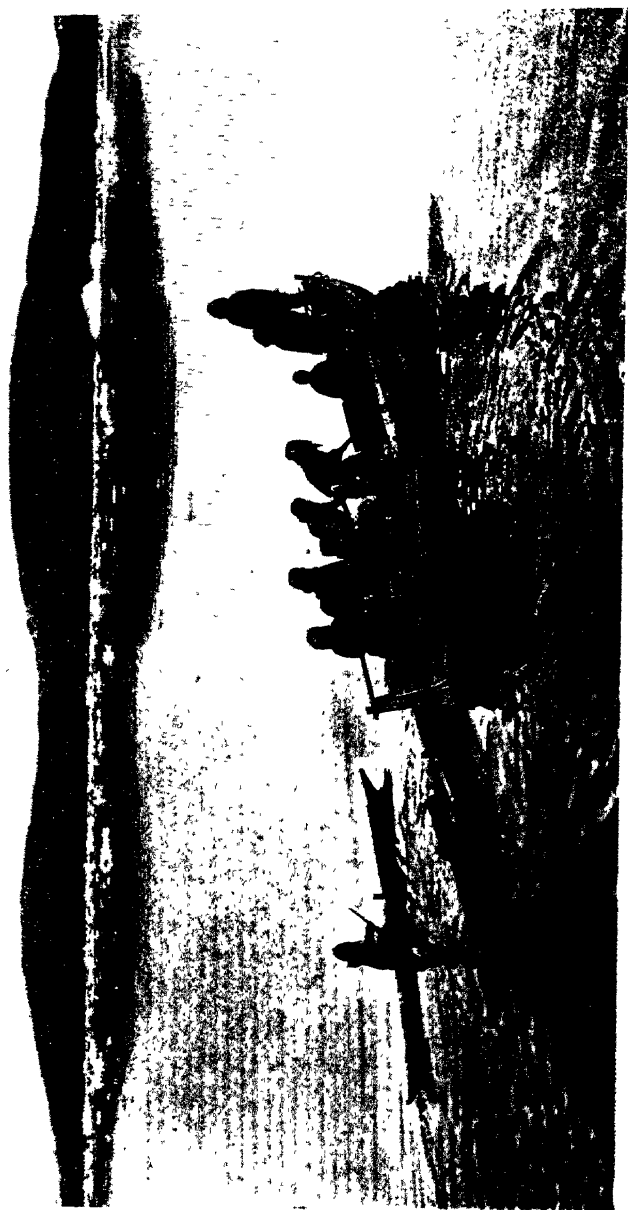
The old cow-walrus displays great affection for her calf, and the calf will stick closely to the mother even after she has been killed, and when the old one sinks the little one will often go down with her and drown rather than leave her. The second cow which we killed had a very young calf, and before we could haul the mother's carcass to the surface the little one had been so long below water that it was nearly drowned when it came up and lay upon the surface. I killed it with my .22 rifle and we took the body into the boat.

We had a long row to land, and although when we started there was almost a calm, before the walrus were butchered and the meat cached a considerable breeze had risen and a heavy swell was rolling in.

It was now decided to run to the little island, pitch camp, and establish a lookout. This we did, but the wind soon increased to such an extent that harpooning from kayaks was out of the question, and presently all hope of further hunting for the day was abandoned, camp was broken and we turned back to Etah.

Shortly after launching the boat a school of white whales began blowing all around us. This is one of





the very few aquatic animals that I observed the Eskimos do not care to attack alone, and is the fastest animal inhabiting these waters. The Eskimos watched them longingly for a little while, but the conditions were not favorable for attacking, and we did not molest them.

For several days the sky had been partially overcast, threatening unsettled weather. A few hours after reaching Etah heavy clouds gathered, a hard rain set in, and for several hours it poured steadily down. When the sky cleared the sun came out bright and warm, and for the first time in a long while we enjoyed a clear day, warm, delightful and beautiful.

I took advantage of the sunshine to spread my musk-ox skins out, with the assistance of the Eskimos. Several of the skins were very wet, and all of the hair was falling from around the hoofs. This was very discouraging, but there was nothing that could be done, save sprinkle a little arsenic where sloughing of the hair occurred, and this I did.

The Eskimos were waiting and anxious for me to go on a walrus hunt, and as soon as I had done the little I could I left the skins in care of Pierwater's kooner, and joined the hunters.

We started for the little island in almost a dead calm, and upon reaching it, hauled the boat to a safe position on the rocks and climbed to the highest pinnacle to scan the sea for walrus. Nothing was in sight save a large school of narwhals traveling northward and a few white whales blowing in the distance quite beyond reach. Here we remained for a con-

siderable time, when it was decided to run down to Cape Alexander and try our luck there.

We had not covered half the distance to the proposed hunting-grounds, when suddenly a strong wind sprang up from the southward, and it was found necessary to turn back to Etah. The wind increased so rapidly that in less than an hour a tempest was raging and we were running before it with bare mast. These sudden, unexpected gales are so frequent in the region that one never can be certain, even in the most promising weather, of escaping them. Our trip was a rough one, and all hands were very glad when finally a safe landing was made at Etah after shipping one sea that half filled the boat. Shortly after our arrival rain set in, very quickly turning to snow, which came down heavily for several hours. The earth, however, was so warm the snow melted almost as fast as it fell. As suddenly as the storm came, it ceased, and the weather cleared bright and fine.

With the return of propitious weather we lost no time in getting away to renew the hunt, for the people still needed a good deal of meat to tide them over the season of paucity, and as was our custom, made at once for the little island to gain a lookout.

In all the broad expanse of water surrounding us nothing was to be seen save a few square-flipper seals. This is the largest of the seals inhabiting these waters, and its skin is especially prized by the Eskimos because of the many uses to which it may be put. It is a very shy seal, and exceedingly difficult to ap-

proach and capture. Kulutinguah, however, concluded to try his fortune, and paddled toward them in his kayak. Standing upon the highest point on the island I watched his movements through my glasses. As he approached the seals he manipulated his kayak very cautiously, in endeavors to steal upon them, but in spite of his caution it soon became evident that he could not get within harpooning distance. Finally he abandoned these tactics, and, concentrating his attention upon one large fellow which he singled out, began firing at it as often as it came to the surface to blow. At the fifth shot he wounded it slightly, and after that it did not remain long under water between blowing periods. This enabled Kulutinguah to approach more closely and presently he had it harpooned.

We soon had the seal ashore and upon the rocks. It was a big, fierce looking beast, as large as a fair-sized walrus. Its head had a particularly ugly appearance, accentuated by long whiskers. Because of its whiskers sailors frequently call the square flipper the "bearded seal." Its flippers are very large, and armed with long claws.

Unlike the method employed in skinning any other of the seals or sea animals, this one was not slit down the stomach, but the skin cut around the neck, and removed whole by pulling it down over the body toward the tail. This is the usual method of skinning square-flipper seals, and is done that long harpoon lines and sled lashings may be cut from the skin, when it is cured, in continuous strips. The head and



flippers fell to my lot as trophies, while the Eskimos cached the meat among the rocks.

We returned to camp after the seal hunt and I retired at once. When I arose a few hours later everything was blanketed with snow, and snow was still falling thick and fast. Pierwater called a little later to tell me he had seen a great many fish at the mouth of a mountain stream not far from Etah. Donning warm clothes and taking my rod, I walked over to the place indicated to try my luck. In succession I cast every fly and every spoon that I had, but at the end of an hour and a half of hard endeavor, without being rewarded with a single rise, gave it up and returned to camp.

All day it snowed, and all the next day, without abatement. This second day of the storm by my reckoning was August fourteenth. An even covering of eight inches of snow lay on the ground, and the air was raw and cold, with the temperature at twenty-one degrees, when I turned into my sleeping-bag that night.

Our summer had been very short, with only a few really warm days. Already the sun was fast dropping toward the horizon, and the long winter with its sunless, depressing night was stealing upon us.

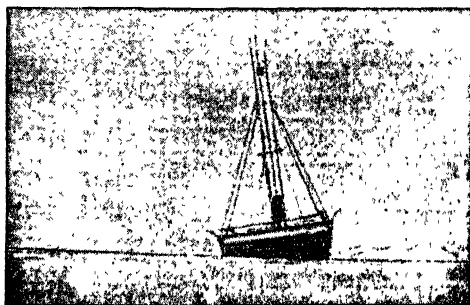
For several days now I had been looking regularly for the ship that was to have come to carry me out of exile. My longing for it to appear was fast growing into impatience, as day after day ended in disappointment. I permitted my imagination to draw for me pictures of the friends at home, the places



SHOOTING A WALRUS FROM THE WHALE-BOAT — WALRUS COME UP FOR ABOUT A MINUTE  
AND STAY UNDER FOR PERHAPS FIFTEEN MINUTES



where I fancied them to be, and the things they were doing. I thrilled with the thought that certainly the day could not be far distant when I should again be in civilization.





## XXV

### THE SHIP AT LAST

**W**HEN I arose snow was still falling, though the wind had died and dead calm prevailed. Late in the day the snow also ceased and in a little while not a cloud obscured the sky.

A heavy south wind, which had blown steadily during two days while the storm was with us, had driven many large icebergs into the harbor and everywhere pans of ice now dotted the sea. It was probable that walrus would be found sleeping or sunning themselves upon these pans. No time was lost in preparation to return to the hunt and we were quickly away. A station was again taken upon the little island, and we were not disappointed in our expectations. Large numbers of the animals were to be seen on pans, as we had hoped they would be, and as a result of a few hours' work four old and two young were secured. Butchering was done now on large convenient pans, and the meat carried in boat loads to the island to be cached.

While thus engaged the fickle wind sprang up again, and before we reached the island with our last load, heavy rollers were pounding in upon the shores.

We had to work desperately hard with that cargo to save it, and I feared that the boat would be smashed upon the rocks before the meat could be landed in safety, though it was finally accomplished without mishap. Snow was now so deep that no rocks could be found with which to cover the cache and we had to leave it piled up unprotected.

It was a long hard row back to Etah directly against a strong head wind. The sky was now overcast, and the weather so cold and raw that before we had covered half the eighteen miles I resigned the steering-oar to Portlooner that I might pull with the others to get warm.

We were treated upon this journey to the wonderful and awe-inspiring spectacle of numerous turning icebergs. Massive pieces, weighing many tons, were breaking from the bergs with reports like sharp thunder-claps, and as they dropped into the sea small tidal waves were created. This changed the equilibrium of the bergs, and occasionally one turned partly over with a loud roar and tremendous upheaval of water. Far away we could hear the icebergs splitting and turning with a noise like distant rolling thunder. This happened to one large iceberg within ten minutes after we had passed close to it, and the Eskimos were deeply impressed by our narrow escape from being swamped. For a long time they talked of it and discussed the occurrence, declaring that they would keep well clear of bergs thereafter. At this season of the year, under certain weather conditions, icebergs turn frequently. One can never tell when they may

break in two, or roll over, and it is always wise to avoid getting too close to them.

A marvelous change instantly took place in the appearance of a berg as it turned. Seven-eighths of the mass of ice it will be remembered remains immersed. Often bergs do not change their equilibrium for months or even years, and during this period the exposed parts, which are pure white, become weather beaten, cut and furrowed into all manner of fantastic shapes. When the position of a berg is changed, however, and the part that has lain beneath the water comes into view, it presents patches and streaks of beautiful green and blue colorings, the whole surface of adamantine hardness and as smooth as polished glass.

We had scarcely reached Etah when another hard snowstorm began, which lasted for ten hours. Then the sun came out with a terrible glare. I took the opportunity to spread upon rocks those of my musk-ox skins that were still damp, first scraping the snow from the rocks. The skins were out hardly three hours, however, when snow again set in, and with the help of the people I had to hurry them under cover. Under such conditions of weather I feared some of them would spoil before I could get them dry.

Finally August eighteenth came—just one year from the day that the *Roosevelt* had steamed out of Etah on her way to the Far North. This remembrance brought home to me with renewed force the fact that my own relief ship was long in coming, and bred new impatience and increased anxiety. The

vessel was considerably overdue and I began to fear some accident had happened her. It was not a very pleasant thought, for I was thoroughly tired of the country, and so hungry for a taste of civilization that even the remote prospect of having to endure another Arctic winter appeared to me as tragic. No man ever had a greater hunger for home than I then experienced. However, my dates were so uncertain that I felt it quite possible I was several days ahead in my reckoning, in which case the ship might not be so late after all, and with this thought I tried to console myself. The Eskimos calculate dates by the development of the little auks and young hares, and they assured me, when I complained that the ship was late, that the *Erik* and *Roosevelt* did not arrive so early the year before. The young auks, they insisted, were much larger and had many more feathers, and the young hares larger and whiter then than now. They told me not to worry, and repeated in a convincing and consoling manner, "Witchchow, omeaksaw," [by and by the ship will be here.]

Snow and rain continued until midnight, when the sun broke out, the clouds dispersed, with dying wind and quieting sea, and there was better promise of good weather than for a long while. During all these periods of storm, when walrus-hunting was not possible, the ever active Eskimos devoted themselves to gathering and caching little auks, or in other land hunting. Six of them left in the whale-boat while it was snowing to run up the shore for this purpose, and had been absent twenty-nine hours when the



## 422 HUNTING WITH THE ESKIMOS

weather cleared. Others worked in the near-by hills.

Sipsu brought me a live young fox which he caught at this time, but I had no place to keep it and care for it properly, and was compelled to decline it. He promptly killed it, and his kooner used the fur to make clothing for the piccaninnies. It had a very soft coat of dark bluish color.

In spite of the promising outlook for good weather the wind was so uncertain, accompanied with flurries of snow, that it was deemed unsafe to risk walrus-hunting, which would have taken us far from land. After three or four days lying about camp, I could endure inactivity no longer, and had some of the Eskimos launch the boat for a run to the head of the harbor after little auks.

We had covered only part of the distance when heavy squalls set in, coming over the hills and hitting us from nearly every point of the compass, forcing us for safety to lower the sail, and with bare mast I could scarcely guide the boat. The wind picked up the water in bucketfulls, driving it into our faces in foam and spray until it blinded us, and I was compelled to make for the nearest land to wait for the squalls to pass. Here we hauled the boat twenty-five yards back upon the beach, where there was a bed of thick moss, turned it over and lashed it down with ropes made fast to rocks so that the wind could not move it.

There was no sheltered spot for the tent and we



ICEBERG OFF THE VIRGINIA



pitched it two hundred yards still farther inland, weighting it down with heavy boulders laid upon the canvas around the bottom. When our sleeping-bags and extra clothing were stowed under its shelter, Kulutinguah contentedly remarked, "Peauke" [very good].

He had no sooner spoken than we saw a tornado bearing down upon us. The Eskimos ran out and threw themselves upon the loose things not yet under cover. A moment later the tent and my sleeping-bag were picked up like scraps of paper and carried far up the valley. A small can of oil, with a hole punched in the top, landed fifty yards away, and only the heavy lashings and anchorage of the boat saved it from being blown away also. When I recovered my sleeping-bag it was badly torn, and the oil can was found to be empty.

The heavens became inky black and it grew very dark for a little while. Then the wind settled to a steady, increasing gale. Under these conditions the tent was recovered and reërected with much difficulty. Three lines were run from the top of the center pole in three directions, and fastened securely to rocks, a heavy circle of rocks was piled upon the canvas around the base, and it was decided that it could not be carried away again unless the canvas tore.

Snow fell, then rain began, dashing in wild fury against my frail lodge of canvas, until it made its way through the cloth, and I was awakened from sound sleep by a stream of water pouring upon my

face. Other streams had found their way through to wet my bed, until the tent offered little more protection from the rain than a sieve.

The storm was raging with terrible fury. From the tent door I could count seven large streams of water rushing down the mountain-side. None of these streams were flowing when camp was pitched. Every few minutes a thunderous noise would startle me, and tons upon tons of rocks would crash down from the heights into the sea. I saw three landslides moving down the mountain at one time, and only a short distance apart. At the time we landed the harbor was almost clear of ice. Now it was jammed, and the ice-pans grinding and crashing together before the force of the gale sent forth a deafening noise.

Leaving the tent, I ran down to the boat and found the Eskimos huddled under it. I remained with them for a little while, but the odor of their wet skin-clothing was so horrible that finally I could stand it no longer, and hurried back to the dripping tent. The Eskimos had used all the fat they brought with them for fire. The only oil remaining after the loss of my canful was a little in the stove. This robbed us of the only possible means of relieving our uncomfortable situation, and with no way to get out of the place there was nothing to do but make the best of it.

At the end of several hours the wind moderated and, all of us soaking wet and shivering cold, we launched the boat to work our way back to Etah

through open leads between the ice-pans. It was only three miles, but it required four hours of hard work to accomplish the journey. Sometimes when strong gusts of wind struck us it seemed that we should have to give up the attempt and await further abatement of the storm.

The mountains here rise about five thousand feet above the sea, and in many places are almost perpendicular. All over the mountain-side in every direction torrents of water poured in great streams into the harbor. Constantly landslides were starting. Great boulders larger than the boat, loosened far up upon the heights, would crash thousands of feet down, loosening other boulders in their descent, and at the bottom shoot fifteen or twenty feet out into the bay with a loud splash. We were compelled, therefore, to keep well off shore to avoid danger of being struck by them.

I was looking forward to a good dry bed when we finally reached camp at Etah, but to my chagrin found my bed, extra blankets, everything, in fact, around the place, completely soaked. Nothing had been spared from the storm. When I got into bed water kept dripping upon my face from the canvas roof of the shack, and I arose and tied a tin can under each leak. I thought I had stopped the annoyance and turned in again, but it was no use. In a little while drip, drip, began from new leaks, and I gave up in despair. Through the whole twenty-four hours after our return wind continued, with heavy rain in the valley and snow on the mountain-

tops. Then to the delight of all the sun showed himself again through the black clouds and the storm was at an end.

Far out near the entrance of the harbor many walrus could now be seen on the ice. The Eskimos were eager to be at them, but the jam lay between. No boat could work its way through the ice, and nothing could be done but lie in idleness and await improved conditions. However, while the Eskimos sat about fretting at their inability to hunt, a north wind sprang up, and even while we complained, the jam began to move so rapidly that when I arose and looked out on the morning of August twenty-eighth, as I reckoned dates, the harbor had been swept clear, though too high a sea was still running to attempt the hunt.

The day was fine and clear, and I walked back into the hills on a search for hares and to exercise a bit. Upon my return I lay down to rest until the sea calmed, and was sound asleep when Kulutinguah rushed in upon me shouting at the top of his voice and acting like a man gone stark crazy. I was wide awake at once. He was shouting, "*Omeakswas! Omeakswas!*" [The ship! The ship!]

I sprang out of bed almost as excited as Kulutinguah, and without putting on many clothes ran to the top of a small hill near camp. In the distance, a few miles to the southward, a large steamer was heading toward Etah. My first thought was that it was a steamer despatched from home to pick me up, but soon my glasses showed her to be the *Roosevelt*. As she drew nearer I put off in the whale-boat, in

company with several of the Eskimos, and we were soon alongside.

No one, unless he has had a similar experience, can fully appreciate my sensations as I stepped again upon the *Roosevelt's* deck, and once more shook the hands of my own kind after a year in the savagery and desolation of the Arctic. Commander Peary, Captain Bartlett and all on board gave me a cordial welcome.

"What day of the month is it?" was my first question.

"August sixteenth," was the reply.

And thus I learned that I had gained fourteen days in my calculation of time, due to the periods of sunless night and perpetual day, and doubtless to some extent to my eagerness for the time to come when I should leave for home. In view of the fact that I had no calendar this was not, after all, so bad.

When the first confusion of our greetings was over I noticed that Marvin was not in the group on deck. I asked for him and learned of his tragic death on the Polar sea. Marvin was a splendid, lovable fellow. A friendship had grown between us on the voyage northward, and I recalled vividly our farewell at Etah, and his injunction to the Eskimos to take good care of me. He had broken through young ice, I was told, and drowned.

Six days before we sighted her the *Roosevelt* had passed southward to hunt walrus in Whale Sound to supply winter food for the Eskimos who had been with the Polar party, and although we had kept a

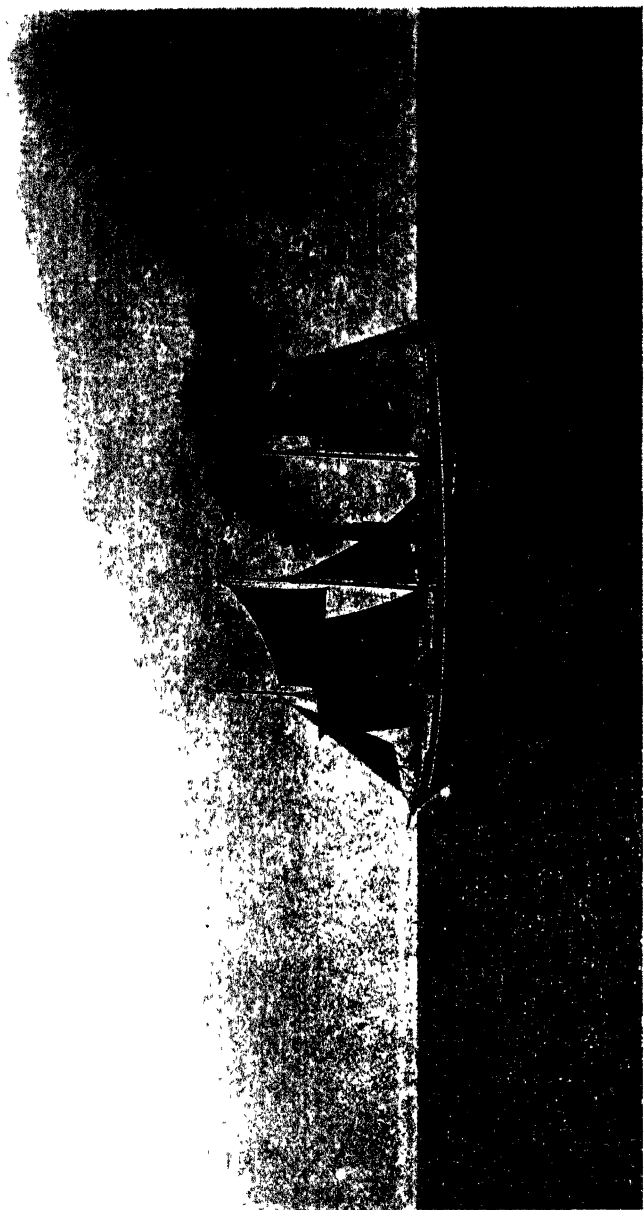


sharp lookout, she had passed us unobserved. For a time I could not realize that the *Roosevelt* had really come, and that I was to return home.

Commander Peary was very kind. When we had dropped anchor in the harbor, he invited me into the cabin for a good drink of brandy, and expressed his pleasure at my success in the musk-ox hunt, and his interest in my winter experience.

Three days the *Roosevelt* remained at Etah. Under Mr. Peary's orders the little shack, which had been my home when here, was torn down, and the provisions that remained were apportioned among the Eskimos that had been with him in the North. Several of these Eskimos remained on the ship, to be left at points on Whale Sound and farther down the coast.

Late on the afternoon of the third day after her arrival, the *Roosevelt* turned her prow southward. As she steamed slowly away from Etah we blew a long blast of the whistle in parting salute to the Eskimos, who had gathered upon two high rocks to wave us farewell. I watched them fade away until they were swallowed up in the dim outlines of distant shore. As they passed from view a feeling of inexplicable sadness fell upon me. These savage, unkempt people had become my friends. For a year I had shared their hospitality and their fortunes in the desolate land which they inhabit. Together we had met and overcome many dangers, endured many hardships, and we had nursed and helped each other in sickness. When men share experiences like these they are



THE *ROSETITE* WITH ALL SAIL SET OFF THE LABRAHOR



drawn very close to each other by a strong bond of human sympathy. I was leaving these savage friends perhaps never to see them again, and this fact tempered the joy of my home-going.

Lack of coal limited the speed of the *Roosevelt* to four knots an hour, and it was not until August twenty-third that we entered North Star Bay. I was asleep at the time, and the captain came below to wake me and tell me that a small vessel had been sighted, northward bound, with all sails set.

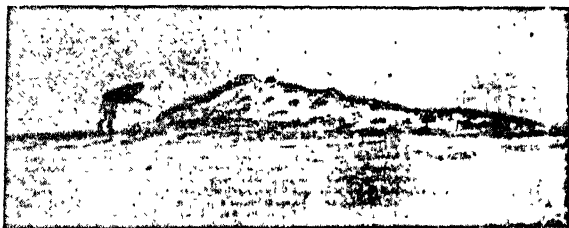
I hurried above decks, and presently we learned that the little vessel was the *Jeanie*, in command of my old friend, Captain Sam Bartlett, of Brigus, Newfoundland, with whom I had come north in the *Erik* the previous year. When Mr. Peary, Captain Robert Bartlett and myself boarded her, we were informed by Captain Sam that he was on his way to Etah to bring me back, and that the *Jeanie* carried fifty tons of coal for the *Roosevelt*, and best of all, letters and newspapers for all of us. It is worth mentioning that the *Jeanie*, a Newfoundland fishing-schooner, is one of the smallest vessels that has ever attempted to penetrate the farther Arctic.

The two vessels were some fifteen miles from the anchorage in North Star Bay when they met. I remained on the *Jeanie*, which followed the *Roosevelt* into the harbor and anchored alongside her. Here with the assistance of twenty Eskimos the coal was soon transferred.

Mr. Peary called me on board the *Roosevelt* and kindly offered me a passage home and the hospitality

of his ship. But after a talk with Captain Sam I decided to remain on the *Jeanie*, run over to the entrance of Jones Sound and follow the edge of the ice southward, in search for a bear.

We prepared for prompt departure. Late in the afternoon good-bys were said to our friends on the *Roosevelt*, the *Jeanie* hoisted sail, weighed anchor, and turned her prow westward.





## XXVI

### BACK TO CIVILIZATION

**T**HE *Jeanie* was equipped with auxiliary power, but her little engine was working poorly, and could not be relied upon in an emergency. Our chief dependence, therefore, were the sails. At this season of the year ice is liable to hem one in at any time, and so late in the season this would mean captivity through the winter, if not destruction of the vessel; but we were very fortunate, and little ice was encountered in crossing Baffin's Bay.

Shortly after leaving the *Roosevelt* a huge school of bull-walrus was sighted, sleeping upon ice-pans. I had a boat lowered away and in a little while had two bulls with fine heads harpooned. None of the crew had ever seen walrus before, and without the assistance of Eskimos we experienced some difficulty in severing the heads.

The ice-pack was encountered a considerable distance off the mouth of Jones Sound. No opening offered an entrance to the sound, and we headed southward, following its outer edge, keeping a sharp lookout meanwhile for bear. We had followed the ice but a short distance when reward came. Two large bears were sighted close at hand and I fired

upon them, killing one. The other took to the water, and ice was running so fast that we could not follow. The one killed, however, satisfied me well, for it proved a very good one.

Below the ice-pack, which choked the entrance to Jones and Lancaster Sounds the coast was low, with high, snow-capped mountains a little distance back from the sea. We hugged the shore until late in the afternoon of August thirty-first, when Ravenseraig Harbor in Eglinton Fjord was reached, and the *Jeanie* was anchored deep down near the mouth of Tay River.

The Tay had the appearance of an ideal salmon stream, and I determined to try my luck. We launched a power-boat, and Captain Sam, two sailors and myself ran a short distance up stream until shallow water was reached. Here we landed, and a mile beyond, where it seemed salmon must certainly be found, I made my casts, while the two sailors reconnoitered farther up the river for deer. No effort on my part could induce a rise, however, and presently when the sailors returned and reported that the Tay had its origin in a glacier not far back, I understood the reason, for fish can only be caught in these regions in streams flowing from lakes or ponds. Glacier streams do not yield them.

The men found old deer-tracks numerous, but no fresh ones, and with no hope of game here, we turned the power-boat to a point of land a mile up the harbor, where the chart indicated an Eskimo settlement. No one was there, though we found some old aban-







HOISTING A POLAR BEAR ON BOARD

doned igloos, and near them a whale-boat bearing the inscription "Dundee Whaler *Morning*, 1905." All about were scattered the bones of large whales. It was dark when we left the igloos, and a quarter after two in the morning before the vessel was reached.

Shortly after six the following morning sails were hoisted and we continued southward, close to the coast, keeping always a sharp lookout for bear. I offered a reward of five dollars for each bear sighted, and as a result every sailor was on the alert. The sea was smooth and fine. Late in the afternoon Agnes Monument, near the north entrance to Clyde River, was passed, and the vessel was turned into the river's mouth and anchored in a picturesque harbor at a point where a small river empties into the Clyde. This stream had every appearance of holding trout or salmon, but an effort yielded no results, and I returned to the ship to find every one asleep.

With daylight we pushed the *Jeanie* up the river for five hours. Reconnoitering for deer and fish brought no success, and finally, hoisting anchor, we retreated some eight miles down stream, where a creek ran out through a valley, and the country promised so well for deer we again anchored.

Four of us went ashore and for five and a half hours followed the valley into the interior. I never saw a finer deer country in my life, but not one was seen. We came upon some hares, two of which I killed, and also saw a fox, but nothing else.

We were a long way from the ship when twilight set in, and in a little while it became very dark, ac-

centuated by a thick fog settling in the valley. When shore was finally gained every one was asleep on board and no effort seemed sufficient to rouse them. We fired guns, and shouted until our throats were sore, but all to no purpose. We were without a boat to take us aboard, and for four hours tramped up and down the shore to keep warm, until some one at length heard us and a boat came to our relief.

This was some thirty miles from the mouth of the Clyde. With apparently neither hunting nor fishing to be had, sail was hoisted at midday on September fourth and we turned toward the open sea. Near sunset while passing a bay two streams of smoke were discovered well up the bay towards its head. This was the first indication of an inhabited settlement that had been seen since our arrival on the coast, and the *Jeanie's* course was at once changed, to investigate the origin of the smoke. Presently two tupeks and three Eskimos were made out. A whale-boat was launched and Captain Bartlett, Mr. Royal K. Fuller (Mr. Fuller was a representative of a New York newspaper, a passenger on the *Jeanie*) and myself went ashore, where we were greeted by an Eskimo named Kidlobber, who with his family occupied the tupeks. A fire kindled with moss and old skins had been lighted to create a smoke and draw our attention. There were no other Eskimos here, and Kidlobber informed us that while hunting alone four days before he had killed three bears, which, he assured us, were plentiful in the region. I offered him an old Springfield rifle in exchange for the three

skins, but he declined it. He knew something about guns, and demanded a 38-55 Winchester as his price and upon that basis we finally made the trade.

It was learned from the Eskimo that a small river emptying into the head of the bay was well stocked with salmon. The captain and myself rigged our tackle, ran the power-boat up the stream as far as we could push it, and under the Eskimo's guidance tried our flies a half mile farther, where we found a fine wide, deep pool. Not a strike did we have, however, and when we finally abandoned the attempt in disgust Kidlobber, who had speared two, which he gave us, explained, "Too much wind, no good."

Thus a day was spent here, and when at length we prepared to continue southward arrangements were made with Kidlobber to pilot us. He had, he informed us, frequently acted in this capacity for whalers visiting the coast. Kidlobber's family and all his belongings were accordingly taken aboard, including a large number of dogs. Two dogs which I had brought from North Star Bay to assist in rounding up bear, had been previously taken ashore for exercise, but both of the brutes bolted the moment they were set free, and that was the last we saw of them.

During the night the Eskimo called me to announce that a large steamer had entered the bay and anchored near us. I went on deck immediately, but the night was too dark to make her out, and I had returned and was just falling asleep again when some one set up a loud knocking outside. Captain Bartlett arose to

investigate the knocking, and presently returned with the second officer of the Canadian steamer *Arctic*; Captain Bernier, the commander, had sent him to inquire who we were.

All of us joined our visitor at once to pay our respects to Captain Bernier, who gave us a cordial welcome and entertained us royally. The *Arctic* had spent the previous winter at Melville Island in the interests of his government. They had found the island abounding in game—musk-oxen, deer and hares—and Captain Bernier presented us with a quarter of musk-ox which had been killed only two weeks before.

Canada lays claim to pretty much all of the Arctic region in general, and to the islands lying between her continental possessions and the Pole specifically, and requires a license to hunt or fish in these regions, or trade with the natives inhabiting them. One of the duties imposed upon Captain Bernier was a strict enforcement of this law. I was a poacher, therefore, in the eyes of Canada, though I had known nothing of this far-reaching law until Captain Bernier informed me of its existence. Never have I willingly poached, and so in exchange for fifty dollars I received the requisite license from the Captain, permitting me to hunt, chase, kill and obtain anything from hares or trout to bears or whales; and to exchange, barter and trade with the said and aforesaid natives of the wide and limitless Arctic dominions of Canada with a free and law-abiding hand. I was very glad to get this document, and I felt now, at

least, that I was breaking no law of any nation, empire, kingdom, or principality, for Canada had clothed me with authority.

We spent a most delightful three hours with Captain Bernier, and I was glad indeed of the opportunity to meet him. Then we returned to the *Jeanie*, breakfasted, hoisted anchor, and headed for another Eskimo settlement which lay across the bay. We found that the place had already been vacated, and our prow was at once turned southward again, toward Cape Raper, at the northern entrance to Isabella Bay, where our pilot advised us we should surely find people living.

Early in the day I told Kidlobber that I would give him plenty of tobacco for every bear he sighted. Within an hour he rushed into the cabin to announce a bear ashore. What he claimed to be a bear, appeared through my glasses to be a patch of dirty yellowish snow on a high point of rocks; but Kidlobber insisted it was a bear, and we hauled in close to shore. As we neared the point I discovered that the Eskimo was right. A large bear was curled asleep upon the high rocks.

A small boat was lowered at once but heavy swells rolling in gave us some trouble in locating a suitable landing-place. When this was found Fuller went ashore first, the Eskimo threw him some lines, to which a dog was made fast, he hauled the dog safely to land, and then I followed.

The hill was steep and the climb hard. Near the top the dog was loosed, and in a few moments was on

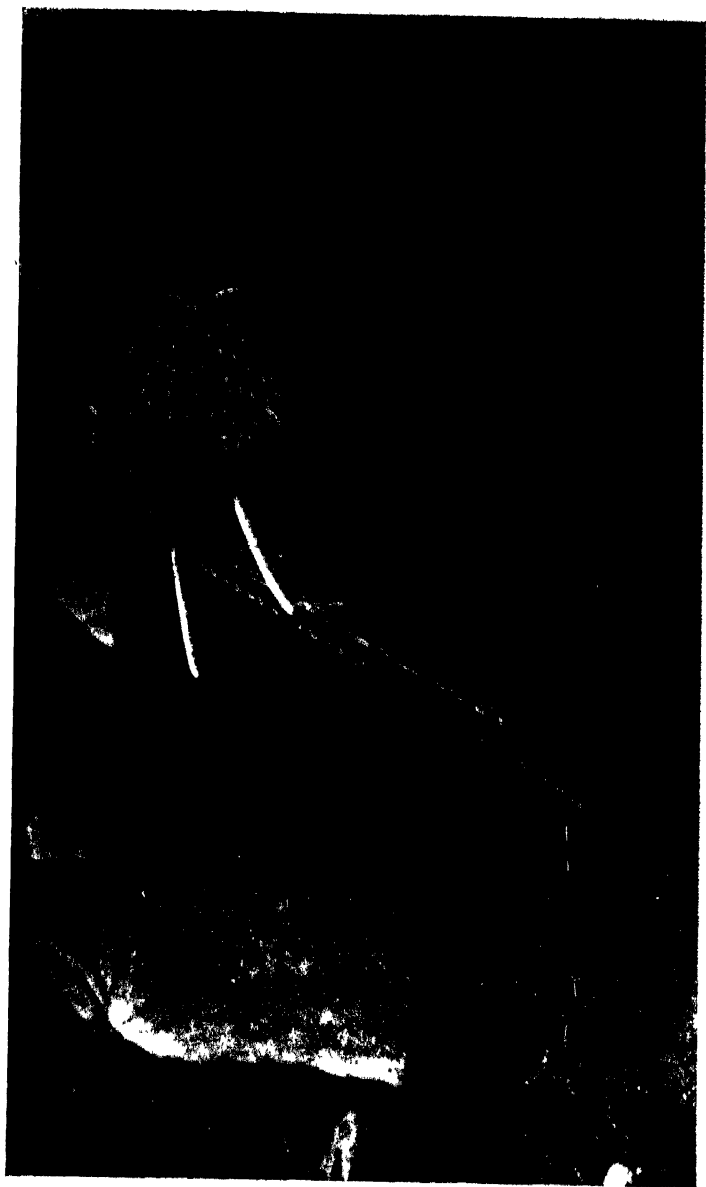
top of the bear, which immediately turned down the hill-side, making for the sea. I sent five shots after it, and the fifth took effect just forward of the hind-quarters. It fell, but in an instant was upon its feet again, gained a slide and reached the water. It swam but a short distance, however, dropped its head and was dead. The boat picked me up, and after much trouble, owing to the swell, the bear's carcass was secured and towed to the ship.

Fuller was nowhere to be seen when we left the land, and a strong tide compelled us to go without him. We had just gained the ship when he appeared on the side of the hill, and when he was finally brought aboard he declared he would not climb another mountain like that for a dozen bears. This was his first experience bear hunting.

The *Jeanie* was getting under way when the *Arctic*, all sails set and engines pulsating, passed to the southward, and was soon swallowed up by the horizon. We followed her continuing to hug the shore, and had gone less than six miles when the Eskimo sighted another bear. Heavy breakers were rolling in all along the shore, however, rendering an attempt to land too hazardous, and we did not molest it. Two hours later the keen-eyed Kidlobber called me again from the cabin, to point out two more bears upon the land. These he told us we could reach by landing the rowboat in a sheltered cove a little below the game. The bears were plainly visible a few hundred yards from shore, walking leisurely northward.

We made the landing with little difficulty and a

A FAIR-SIZED WALRUS







dog was sent on the track. In a short time one of the bears plunged down the steep bank into the water and a few yards from land dived. Several minutes later we espied him a considerable distance off-shore, among small ice. We gave chase at once in the power-boat, and when within fifty yards I told Fuller to shoot. But he was not accustomed to shooting from a boat, a heavy swell made it particularly difficult in this instance, and after five shots, all of which went high, I tried my luck, as we had but few cartridges with us, and my second shot killed the game. Shooting from a boat with any degree of precision is a difficult feat for a novice. My experience with the Eskimos had given me the needed practice. To my delight this proved to be a bear of exceptional size and Captain Sam, who had seen many in his day, declared it the largest he had ever seen.

Night had set in before we reached Cape Raper. It was excessively dark, and how we were to make the harbor I did not know. The Eskimo assured me, however, he could do it, and relying on Providence and his skill we placed ourselves in his hands. He took the *Jeanie* safely to her anchorage, but how he ever accomplished it in the pitchy darkness is beyond my comprehension.

When daylight came I went ashore and found several Eskimos camped at the mouth of a small river. They had three excellent bearskins, captured the previous day, and I exchanged some tobacco for them. They had killed six in all, they told me, but the

skins of the other three were cached a long way up the coast.

Our next harbor was Harriford, and here Kidlobber was to leave us. Without loss of time we were off, and ran into the place in the late afternoon. Immediately anchor was dropped a large number of Eskimos—all women and children—came alongside in whale-boats. I invited them aboard, and the whole crowd scrambled on deck, save two who rowed back to the tupeks to get another load to swell the number. The absence of men was accounted for when the visitors explained that the whaler *Morning*, Captain Adams, had arrived a few days earlier, killed two large black whales, sighted several more, and the men had gone with the ship to assist in a further search for whales.

There were thirty-five of the Eskimos on deck at one time, and I took advantage of the opportunity to have some of the women clean my bearskins. They did it very expeditiously, and made a splendid job of it, for which I was particularly grateful. Our visitors remained with us until daylight, then we sent them ashore, Kidlobber going with them, and continued our homeward journey.

Shortly after leaving Harriford the weather grew thick with heavy squalls, and for safety we put to the open sea, with the expectation of making land again near the mouth of Cumberland Sound.

On the tenth we crossed the Arctic Circle, and said farewell to the region of long night and midnight sun, and on the afternoon of that day passed Cape

Walsingham, first sighted by Davis in 1565. This was a raw gray day, but the sky was clear and the weather fine when at half past seven the following morning land was sighted and we hauled in for it at once. The ice was heavily jammed along shore, and we skirted its edge, keeping a sharp lookout for game.

In the afternoon, when off Leopold Island two bears were discovered on the jam a long distance away. The ice was too heavy to put the schooner in, and it was impossible to approach them in a boat. We pulled in as close to the jam as safety would permit, and I decided to try a few shots from deck. Raising the sights on my 30-40 as high as they would go, I blazed away, and at the fourth shot one of the bears dropped, while the other took to the water inside the heavy floe. A boat put me on the ice and I was able to walk to within fifty yards of the wounded bear, whose hind quarters had been broken down by the shot. He was biting furiously at the wound and growling. One bullet back of his fore shoulder put an instant end to his suffering.

A heavy swell was running in from the north, driving the ice, and I feared we should lose the game, but one of the sailors came to my assistance, jumped from lump to lump of ice, some scarcely large enough to bear his weight, reached the pan alongside of which the carcass lay, fastened a line around its neck, and presently we had it in open water.

While we were engaged in this something went wrong with the *Jeanie's* auxiliary engine, and she

all but drifted into an iceberg. Over an hour passed before the engine could be made to work again, and then we quickly had the bear aboard. It was even larger than the big one killed previously.

Much ice choked the entrance to Cumberland Sound, and it was decided to make direct for Cape Haven. We were on our course on the afternoon of September thirteenth, hemmed in by icebergs on one side, surf on the other, when a rowboat with sail set was discovered bearing down upon us. The occupants hailed us frantically as we passed, but conditions were such that we could not luff to take them aboard then. Seven white men and an Eskimo were seen in the boat, the white men members of a shipwrecked crew, and we ran into the harbor at Cape Haven to await them.

An hour later the boat came alongside the *Jeanie*. The men proved to be Mr. O. C. Forsyth Grant, a trader, and the crew of his wrecked vessel the *Snowdrop*, which had been reported lost with all hands. The *Snowdrop* had gone upon the rocks on September eighteenth, 1908, and during the previous winter the men had endured the most terrible hardships and suffering. During considerable periods their only food had been boiled sealskin and rotten seal meat some of which was more than a year old.

Considering these hardships they were in fairly good shape, with the exception of one poor fellow, who they said was then with the Eskimos at the head of Frobisher's Bay at a place which the sailors called Ward's Inlet. This man's feet had been so

badly frozen during the winter that an Eskimo woman had amputated one of them and all the toes of the other foot. Grant and two of the men had seen him three months before our arrival, while at the head of the bay deer-hunting, and he was at that time suffering intense pain and in a very serious condition of health. It was impossible for them to move him then, and none of the men had remained with him or returned again to see him, though they believed the Eskimos were doing all that could be done for him and were treating him with the greatest kindness.

From day to day and week to week the wrecked crew had been watching and praying for a ship to succor them. Early on the morning before our arrival they had sighted a steamer southward bound and about eight miles off shore. They endeavored to intercept her in their boat, but evidently because their signals were not seen, she passed on. Then they turned back, and fortunately fell in with us upon their return to camp. Captain Brown of the *Snowdrop* told us he had spent a great part of his life in the Arctic. He was broken-hearted and completely discouraged when the steamer passed, believing it the last hope of escape from another winter of torture. When the old Captain felt the decks of the *Jeanie* under his feet he broke down and wept.

We told them to get all their trappings ready to bring aboard, and we would make an attempt to run up Frobisher's Bay for the other unfortunate man, and fetch him out if he was still alive.

This was no small undertaking. Frobisher's Bay is an exceedingly dangerous body of water to navigate. Everywhere are hidden reefs and narrow passages all uncharted. To add to this there is a rise and fall of tide of from forty to forty-five feet, which leaves many rocks exposed at low water; while at the entrance of the Bay it runs at ebb and flow at a rate of about eight miles an hour.

Our little vessel could never stem this, at its outward flow, and we therefore made ready to pass through the straits at the entrance when tide was at half flood. We were but three-quarters through the strait when a heavy head wind sprang up, and forced us to seek anchorage in a small harbor some five miles from the entrance. Grant then expressed himself as believing it unsafe to make another attempt.

Captain Bartlett and I talked the situation over. We could not leave until every effort to rescue the unfortunate man had been made. At the same time the season was late, we were in practically the position the *Snowdrop* was caught in just a year before, and we were running great risks. Ice was liable to hem us in at any moment. It was decided finally to dispatch Grant and six of his men in our power-boat to make the search, and this plan was carried into execution the following day, September fifteenth.

When the party returned on the afternoon of the seventeenth Grant reported that they had made a complete search, but all the Eskimos had apparently left the bay, and no trace of the missing man could be found. Nothing more seemed possible, and very

regretfully we put out before daybreak on the morning of September eighteenth with our passengers aboard, and turned the *Jeanie's* prow toward St. Johns, Newfoundland.

That evening we passed Resolution Island, crossed Hudson Straits in the night, and the following morning had our first view of the Labrador coast; on the twenty-third we ran into Indian Harbor, the first point where wireless communication could be had with the outside world. A strong head wind held us at Indian Harbor until the morning of the twenty-fifth, when with reefed mainsail we began the final run to St. Johns. We were now dependent entirely upon the sails, as the *Jeanie's* engine had been disabled beyond repair.

I shall not attempt to describe my sensations as the *Jeanie* entered the land-locked harbor of St. Johns and I finally stepped ashore to find myself again in civilization. This was September twenty-eighth, 1909. On the night of July seventeenth, 1908, I had boarded the *Erik* in Sydney Harbor, and for more than fourteen months I had been cut off from the world.

THE END









